

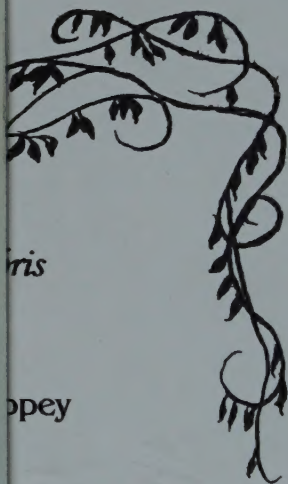
RHIANNON

AN INQUIRY
INTO THE FIRST AND THIRD BRANCHES
OF THE MABINOGI

BY
W. J. GRUFFYDD

UNIVERSITY OF WALES PRESS

THIS book contains some of the fruits of a life-long study of those early classics of Welsh literature, the *Mabinogion*, by a leading authority in that field, and forms a companion volume to his previous work, *Math Vab Mathonwy*. It investigates the origins of the stories of *Pwyll* and *Manawydan*, the first and third of the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, and traces the development of these tales through the tangled web of primitive myth, folk-lore and native tradition, to the conscious artistry of their final form.



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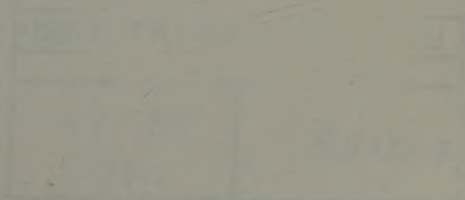
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AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGINS OF THE
FIRST AND THIRD BRANCHES OF THE MABINOGI

*THE D. O. EVANS LECTURES, 1951,
delivered at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth*

BY

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Er Cof am
DAVID OWEN EVANS, A.S.
(1876 - 1945)

Noddwr Diwylliant Cymru
a Chyfaill ei Hysgolheigion

FOREWORD

These lectures, delivered at the University College of Wales in October, 1951, were made possible by the generosity of my friend and colleague, the late D. O. Evans, Member of Parliament for Cardiganshire. It is my deep regret that I can no longer thank him, but I do warmly thank the Principal, Council and Senate of the University College of Wales and the members of the Department of Welsh for giving me this opportunity of making public some of the results of a lifelong study, and to associate the work with the memory of a faithful friend and a generous patron of Welsh learning.

The Mabinogion, as far as the study of origins is concerned, are virgin ground and what follows in this book must necessarily be pioneer work. All I claim for it is that I have attempted to blaze a trail, however faintly, in the hope that the travellers who follow may be less bewildered than I was when I undertook the journey.

CONTENTS

<i>The Four Branches of the Mabinogi</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<i>Pwyll I</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Pwyll and Rhiannon	..	..	..	..	..	..	47
<i>Manawydan</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	68
Rhiannon..	..	..	..	..	..	..	90
Summary	..	..	..	..	..	..	109
Abbreviations	..	..	..	..	..	..	113
Index	..	..	..	..	..	..	114

I

THE FOUR BRANCHES OF THE MABINOGI

THE object of these lectures will be to discuss some of the questions concerning the origins and development of *Pwyll* and *Manawydan*, the first and third of the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, hereafter to be referred to simply as the *Mabinogi* (singular) or *Mabinogion* (plural). I must emphasize the qualification 'some', as there will remain an almost infinite number of questions which I shall not attempt to answer. In the words of Alfred Loisy (*Origins of the New Testament*), 'whoever has enough good will to see in this work, before all else, . . . a programme for the research that is needed in this field and is far from being completed, will exactly discern the intention of the author.'

The *Four Branches* form the first item in the mixed collection of Welsh tales and romances which Lady Charlotte Guest called 'Mabinogion,'¹ and which as a whole is still popularly but inaccurately so named. The study of origins will lead us to consider their development into their present form as we know it in *The White Book of Rhydderch*, a manuscript dated by experts about 1300-25, and in a few scattered fragments in an earlier MS., Peniarth 6. No attempt will be made to cover the ground already traversed by those scholars who have dealt with the dating of the texts and cognate matters, in particular Sir Ifor Williams in his edition of *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi*. Their general conclusions will be assumed except in the few instances where I may venture to differ.

I have referred to the 'present form of the Mabinogion'; we shall find it profitable as a preliminary to our studies to

¹ *The Mabinogion . . . with an English Translation and notes* by Lady Charlotte Guest, London, 1849. It seems to me certain that the main credit for this work should go to the two scholars who "devilled" for her, the Rev. John Jones (Tegid) (1792-1852) and the Rev. Thomas Price (Carnhuanawc) (1787-1848).

consider what that 'present form' is. The first conclusion which an intelligent reader will reach about the present form is that it is meant to be literature in the strictest sense, just as the *Odyssey* is meant to be literature or, in a different genre, the *Aeneid* or *Paradise Lost*. I have quoted such highly developed forms as the latter in order to correct, if possible, a misconception on the part of those who persist in regarding the Mabinogi as a kind of reporter's transcript of a spoken tale. In other words, if we make due allowance for errors in transcription, omissions, and some other adventitious changes, the Mabinogi, in spite of the almost unbelievable complexity of its material, is the product of one mind, the fruit of one integrated artistry. The man who wrote it was not necessarily a *cyvarwydd*, a reciter of stories; the only possible term to describe him is 'author', exactly as Homer is the author of the *Odyssey*. He could be, and probably was, one of the *cyvarwyddon*, just as a modern preacher whose normal occupation is the oral proclamation of religious truths may deviate into literature by writing a systematic account of those truths as a whole. What he is not is a compiler, because his work is an artistic whole fused together by the fire of genius. Whatever tests of artistry we may apply to him, he compares more than favourably with writers like Chrétien de Troyes and others who based their stories on the 'matter of Britain'; compared with him these others are tedious, repetitive, and unbalanced. If the 'matter of Britain' is the common basis of both the Mabinogi and the work of the continental writers, the native has completely eclipsed the stranger in the artistic use of his material.

If the material from which it is built bore at one stage the distinctive marks of oral recitation, the Mabinogi, as we know it, has shed most of them. The author never refers to himself; there is not a single trace of narrative in the first person, and no such phrases as 'hearken, lordings', 'listen you well', 'I will now relate', and so on, which are found, for instance, in many of the Lives of the Saints, in the numerous songs and tales of geste and prowess popular in England and France in medieval times, and particularly in the folk tales

recited to this day in Ireland in which a formula like ' I know this tale to be true because I was present ' is a regular feature. The recited tales of Celtic countries are characterized by a curious artificial diction inlaid into the narrative, whether in the form of ' runs ' as in Ireland and Gaelic Scotland, or as a vast agglomeration of compound adjectives as in the Welsh *areithiau* and in parts of *Kulhwch ac Olwen*, but if these ever existed in the material of the basic spoken story, the *cyvarwyddyd*, they have been eliminated by our author. The first part of *Kulhwch* (which is not a Mabinogi), has many other marks of a *cyvarwyddyd* which has not yet been taken in hand by a writer, such as the abrupt descriptive phrases without a finite verb, lack of sequence in the incidents, and above all that distinguishing mark of early recited entertainments, the ' Flyting at the Gate ', or the Dialogue between the Visitor or Quester and the Porter. (It may be noted in passing that this piece of celticity has survived in Shakespeare's version of the Macbeth legend, and generations of commentators have failed to see that this so-called ' comic relief ' was a traditional part of the *cyvarwydd*'s art).

Further, the author of the Mabinogi has been unusually successful in dissociating himself from the modern world of his own generation. In three of the Branches, the word *Cymry* to denote the land where the action is staged is not found, and in the fourth, *Branwen*, it is only mentioned twice, and in those portions which are demonstrably late additions. Now we know that spoken tales of all periods are almost always presented ' in modern dress ', so to speak ; fastidiousness about mere anachronisms is no part of a reciter's scholarship. But it is significant that in the whole of the *Four Branches* there are extremely few references to contemporary conditions or customs,—such as the bishop's retinue in *Manawydan*, and even that was not introduced by the author, but is derived, as we shall see, from an unrelated folk-tale which had contaminated the original material of this branch. The rare references to the contemporary political divisions of Wales, the different cantreys and commotes, are certainly glosses or later additions.

But, it may be objected, the Mabinogion, like the recited tales of all countries, are notoriously full of incoherences and contradictions. That of course is true, and a large portion of the argument in these lectures will be based upon them, but as a plea against their status as literature rather than as a collection of spoken tales, it is not valid, because most of the puzzling inconsequences of the Mabinogion, as we shall see, developed in the spoken cyvarwyddyd and had already entered into the totality before the author took the matter in hand. He had to make the best he could out of unpromising material which had already been distorted during the centuries when it had passed from cyvarwydd to cyvarwydd, and the particular version on which the author based the final account was by no means the least contaminated, as is proved by the fact that both Tudur Aled and Lewis Môn, at the end of the fifteenth century, name Arianrhod and not Goewin as the woman whose virginity Math guarded so carefully in *Math vab Mathonwy*; that is to say, these two bards quote a more primitive and truer version of the Conception of Lleu Llawgyffes than is found in the Mabinogi of *Math vab Mathonwy* itself.¹

This brings us to another point of prime importance. Why is it that the references to the Four Branches of the Mabinogi are exceedingly rare in the huge corpus of poetry of the *cywyddau* period (1340-1620), while there are abundant references to the foreign medieval romances such as *Bown of Hampton*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Foulk Fitzwarren*, the *Chansons de Geste* and especially the later Arthurian Romances? Tudur Aled, for instance, in his eight score poems, has only two meagre references to the Mabinogion, both to *Branwen*, and four to a more primitive version, but his poetry abounds in comparisons from the Arthurian and later romances; as far as I have been able to judge, roughly the same proportion is found in the works of the other bards. Add to this the fact that we have evidence of only three manuscripts of the Mabinogion as compared, for instance, with the great number

¹ See MM, pp. 192, ff.

of versions of Geoffrey's *Brut*, and of these three one is simply a direct copy of the other. We are forced then to conclude (1) that Welshmen of the medieval period knew only of the recited traditional cyfarwyddyd ; (2) that the primitive cyfarwyddyd *as such* had never been reduced to writing, since there is no vestige of any manuscript containing such work ; (3) that the Mabinogi is a piece of consciously *original* literature based on traditional material ; it is to be correlated with Chrétien's poems and *not* with his bases ; (4) that our *Mabinogion*, as we have them, remained practically unknown to the Welsh whose 'light reading' was confined to the Arthurian tales, Geoffrey's *Brut*, and the foreign romances.¹

Here another question arises. Granted that the Welsh bards who eagerly sought comparisons and analogies among the legends and romances current in their times, show no evidence of acquaintance with the written Mabinogi, why do they make such little use of the vast storehouse of tradition contained in the recited cyfarwyddyd from which the Mabinogi was compiled ? In answer to that question, it may be said that the cyfarwyddon, the reciters and entertainers, were themselves a lower order of bardism. They are definitely called *beirdd* 'bards' in the account of Gwydion's ruse in *Math*, while the poets whose work has been preserved were *penceirddiaid* 'chiefs of song'. The *penceirddiaid* were strictly forbidden by the rules of their craft to concern themselves (*ymyrryd*) with the work of the lower orders of bardism, the entertainers, whom they traditionally despised and constantly abused, and it was beneath their professional dignity to refer to any form of tradition that was not preserved in recognised canonical form, such as the Triads. The two heroes of the Mabinogi are, as we shall see, Pryderi of Dyved and Lleu of Gwynedd, yet neither of them is mentioned in the voluminous works of Tudur Aled, and I can remember no reference in the works of other bards beyond purely formal phrases such

¹ It was not till Lady Charlotte Guest published her *Mabinogion* in 1849 that they became generally known in Wales. It was then, too, that her translation made them known in England.

as the naming of Dyved as *Pryderi dir*, 'the land of Pryderi', and, as we shall see, there is reason to think that the quasi-historical Pryderi did not figure in the first form of the original legends on which the *Mabinogi* is based.

All these facts seem to point to one conclusion—the *Mabinogi* is a unique piece of literary art, and therefore necessarily the work of one man, the author, whoever he may have been. He based his prose epic on a series of recited tales; he makes that plain by his references to his sources, *herwydd y dyweidd y cyvarwyddyd*—'as the cyvarwyddyd says', and by his giving to different sections of *Branwen* their original designation.¹ As Sir Ifor Williams has shown, the evidence of the language and orthography proves that this prose epic had been composed before the end of the eleventh century, to give a very conservative estimate; this means that the stimulus to composition was *not* the great interest in the 'matter of Britain' which followed the emergence of Arthur and his men as the heroes of European romance at the beginning of the twelfth century. We have seen that the literate Welsh of medieval times were so unaware of the two manuscripts containing the *Mabinogi* that only one copy (the *RB Mabinogion*), was made by the scribes who avidly sought romantic material,² and that the Welsh bards seem to be ignorant of their contents. I conclude that the *Mabinogi* is only a part—and a forgotten part—of that vast 'matter of Britain', of which another and cognate portion furnished the material for the Arthurian tales. I have called it an 'epic' because it bears the marks of all other epics such as the *Odyssey*, for instance—it is the final arrangement and harmonizing of contradictory oral material. Its characters are not merely pawns in the story, struts to support the narrative, as they are in folk-lore tales; they are individuals in their own right, and they impose upon us the acceptance of their integrated character as effectively as Odysseus, Achilles, and Nausicaa.

My concern then is to show if I can, not how artistically

¹ See pp. 9-10.

² *RB* is a copy of *WB*.

the author manipulated his material, since that belongs to the realm of pure literary criticism, but how the material before him had developed its amazing complex of incongruities and contradictions. In order to do that I propose to reverse the usual procedure in inquiries of this kind by giving at the outset a summary of my conclusions so that those who are interested may know, at every step, to what end the argument proceeds.

The material underlying the prose epic—or saga, to use a convenient if inexact term—is derived from the legendary traditions of two districts in Wales which at one time were Irish in population and speech—Dyved and Gwynedd or, in modern naming, Pembrokeshire, and Anglesey-Caernarvon-Merioneth.¹ It has been argued from the evidence of language that the author was a native of Dyved, but we do not know enough of the history of linguistic forms in the Mabinogion (such as the past tense in -s, which still distinguishes the southern dialects) to base a definite conclusion upon them ; all we can venture to say is that the Mabinogion are written in standard literary Welsh of the most meticulous form. The references to place names do not seem to support the Dyved provenance as the author shows much more detailed acquaintance with Gwynedd, but then again, it is dangerous to base any conclusion on these references to places because it might be plausibly argued that the nature of the onomastic stories in the Mabinogion shows that the author could not have an intimate knowledge even of the place-names of Gwynedd. For instance, in *Math*, it is stated in a sentence which in the context is entirely otiose, that the foot-soldiers (*peddyd*) in the battle between Pryderi and Gwydion could not be restrained from shooting at each other. That sentence must have been inserted in the cyfarwyddyd to explain the name of the spot in Arvon where the battle took place, *Rhyd y Peddestri*, ‘the Ford of the Foot-soldiers.’ In the same Branch, Blodeuwedd and her maidens (*morynion*) are drowned in a lake in Ardudwy; the purpose of bringing in the

¹ For details see MM pp. 342-3.

maidens, for the first time, into the story was to explain the name of the lake, *Llyn y Morynion*.¹ But neither Rhyd-y-Peddestri nor Llyn y Morynion is mentioned, and it is inconceivable that the author, if he were a native of Gwynedd, would have omitted to specify the places which bore those names, and thereby give a reason for what otherwise are meaningless details. This peculiarity of the onomastic stories is illustrated in the hidden reference to Dublin in *Branwen*, where Bendigeidfran is said to have laid down his body between the Island of the Giants and Ireland. His men then cast hurdles of wattle (*chwydeu*) on him so that they could pass over him to the other side. This of course is to explain the Irish name of Dublin, *Baile Atha Cliath*, 'the town of the Ford of the Hurdles', but the name of Dublin, which the hurdles were meant to explain, is not mentioned. This suggests also that the early version of this part of *Branwen* was in Irish.

The second Branch, *Branwen*, begins by describing Bendigeidfran at his court in Harlech, sitting 'on the rock of Harddlech'. The word for 'rock' in the text is *carreg*, by no means the usual term. Now *Harddlech* is compounded of *hardd* 'high' and *llech* 'rock,' and the rock of Harlech is traditionally called *Y Llech*; no native of Harlech even today would call it by any other name. But the author does not know that usage, and could not have listened to the legends of Harlech on the spot; otherwise, he would not have named Y Llech by the unspecific word 'carreg'. It is as if an Englishman in speaking of London had called Tower Hill the 'stone of London.'

The Dyved material was in the main the saga of the Birth, Exploits, and Death of Pryderi, lord of Dyved, who had his court at Narberth. The Gwynedd material was mainly the Birth, Exploits, and Death of Lleu Llawgyffes, the activities of whose family were centred around a legendary Caer Dathal, somewhere in the modern Caernarvonshire. These two elements however, are not co-ordinate for two reasons ;

¹ For a discussion of these points see MM pp. 338-343.

first, the Pryderi saga is the actual framework of the Four Branches, each Branch being devoted to one distinct episode in the Hero's career, but the saga of Lleu Llawgyffes is found only in *Math*, inserted bodily into one division of the Pryderi framework, and was originally completely independent. Secondly, the story of Lleu as well as his name is found in Irish, both in the old literature and in modern oral tradition, where the articulation of its various parts is much more logical and coherent than in the Mabinogi, but the name of Pryderi is unknown outside Wales, and apart from his *Compert* or Conception Story in the first part of *Pwyll*, his history cannot be matched in Ireland even under another name. Even more significant is the fact that, unlike most of the Mabinogion characters, his name has not passed into French Romance. (A comprehensive treatment of the Welsh names in Chrétien de Troyes and in Arthurian Romance generally is contained in Professor Loomis's *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes*).

In addition to the Lleu saga, Gwynedd has contributed another element—the legends of Bendigeidfran connected with Harlech. I shall try to show in another inquiry that these are chronologically and structurally later accretions to the Mabinogi. In this particular survey it will be sufficient to note that portions of the second Branch *Branwen* are actually assigned by the author to their sources in *cyvarwyddyd*, and are thus treated differently from the rest of the material with the exception of a part of *Manawydan*, to which we shall revert later. At the end of *Branwen* we read:

‘And thus ends this Branch of the Mabinogi, concerning the *Blow on Branwen*, which was one of the Three Evil Blows in this island, and concerning the *Ysbyddawd* (Company?) of *Brân* when the host of fourteen and seven score countries went to Ireland to avenge the blow on Branwen; and concerning the *Feast in Harlech* for seven years, and concerning the *Singing of the Birds of Rhiannon*, and concerning the *Ysbyddawd Benn* (the Company of the Head?) for four score years.’

At the end of the account of the four score years' feasting we read :

' And concerning those four score years, it was called *Ysbyddawd Urddawl Benn* (The Companionship of the Honoured Head ?). Where they went to Ireland was the *Ysbyddawd* (Meeting or Joint Story?) of *Branwen and Matholwch*.'

And later :

' And that is what this *cyvarwyddyd* says of their exploit. That [i.e. the *cyvarwyddyd*] is *The men who set out from Ireland*.'

I can only conclude from these obscure references that the material which the author was using in *Branwen* had not been assimilated into the framework of the Four Branches as completely as the rest of the material, and that immediately before *Branwen* was reduced to writing, these named portions were independent oral tales. In other words, in *Branwen* it was the author himself or his immediate predecessor who brought together its different components rather than the early *cyvarwyddon*. By 'components' I mean the three or four main stories which even now retain their distinct individuality, and not the separate legends which make up the complex of each of those stories.

It is unnecessary to repeat here what has been set out in great detail in *Math vab Mathonwy* regarding the scheme of the *Four Branches*.¹ The conclusions which are contained in that work will be therefore briefly summarized.

In their simplest form, that is to say, before they had accumulated the mass of alien motives which obscure the clear run of the story, the Mabinogion contained the complete life of a Hero, Pryderi. His history was divided into four Branches.² Each Branch contained one main incident in the life of the Hero, and, as is customary in the Irish cycles

¹ See MM, Part vii, pp. 322 ff.

² For the meaning of 'Branches' see *op. cit.* pp. 49, 324-5.

of stories, it formed in itself a complete tale. Even now under all the enormous mass of accretions and additions made by generations of story-tellers, we can still discern this original foundation. In the first Branch, *Pwyll*, we have :

(1) The 'Conception Story' of Pryderi, or his *Compert*, as it is called in Irish. This shows how his parents met, how he came to be born, and how he got his name. It also incidentally explains why he is known under different names, and why his paternity is accredited by different traditions to different fathers.

(2) One version of the *Rape of Pryderi*, how he came to be snatched from his mother when he was about three nights old, and how he was afterwards restored to his mother by the man who, in immemorial mythology, was his father.

In the second Branch, *Branwen*, the only reference to Pryderi is as one of the warriors who escaped from the disaster in Ireland. I shall endeavour to explain the significance of this in another place. It is enough here to point out that *Branwen* contains, hidden under the surface, a garbled account of his traditionally great feat, namely the Expedition to the Other-world, and his snatching from Pen Annwvn, the Chief of the Other-world, his Cauldron of Resurrection.

The third Branch, *Manawydan*, contains an alternative version of the incident described in the second part of *Pwyll*, namely the *Rape of Pryderi*, and the restoration to his mother by Manawydan, who is made to marry his mother, Rhiannon, in order to bring him as far as possible into traditional relationship of Father of the Hero.

In the fourth Branch, *Math vab Mathonwy*, we find what is probably the least altered of the incidents in the history of Pryderi, namely his Death, or in Irish, his *Aided*. This central incident of *Math* makes by itself a complete story, and the episodes leading up to Pryderi's tragic end, namely the causes of the war between Dyved and Gwynedd, bear a clear

logical relation to the main portion, even under the almost incredible accumulations which have made this branch the most complex of the four.

We may now, for the sake of convenience, anticipate the conclusions in the latter part of this work by stating, in the simplest form, what the original Saga of Pryderi was, as far as it can be gathered from the Mabinogion :

Rhiannon a daughter of the King of Annwvn (Other-world) was betrothed in Annwvn to the King of that country, *one* of whose many names, Gwawl vab Clud, must suffice for this summary. But before he could marry her—that is to say, in the usual Celtic interval of a year and a day between the betrothal and the wedding—she met Pendevig [or Pendaran] Dyved, and fell in love with him. After she had clearly demonstrated to him that she was an Other-world being, and that many of the laws of this mortal life did not apply to her actions, she declared herself to be in love with him, and in spite of her previous betrothal, arranged to marry him. To the marriage-feast of Rhiannon and Gwawl vab Clud at her father's court, therefore, the Lord of Dyved came in the guise of a beggar and, by means of a magic trick in which he had been coached by Rhiannon, gained possession of Rhiannon, and they were married without further hindrance.

The Other-world suitor was still determined to possess Rhiannon, now consort of the Lord of Dyved. So he contrived to meet Pendevig Dyved at the time when Pendevig Dyved was being harrassed by a King of Annwvn who was his enemy, this same King being Gwawl himself or, under another name, Pwyll Pen Annwvn—Pwyll the Head of Annwvn. Gwawl, or Pwyll, this Other-world King, or, as we may now more conveniently call him, the Head (Pen) of Annwvn, met the Lord of Dyved and offered to conquer his ' enemy ' for him on condition that he, the Head of Annwvn, should change forms with the Lord of Dyved for a year

and live with Rhiannon in her husband's form and in such a way that Rhiannon herself could not recognise that he was not really her husband.

So it was done, and Pen Annwvn possessed Rhiannon as he had planned. In due time a child was born to Rhiannon, so that it was impossible now to say whether the child was the son of the real Lord of Dyved or of the Head of Annwvn who was in the form of the Lord of Dyved. Different story-traditions gave this boy different names—*Gwri*, *Gweir*, and *Pryderi*. We shall call him here by the name which came to be assigned to him in the Four Branches, *Pryderi*. So *Pryderi* can be regarded either as the son of the Head of Annwvn or as the son of the Lord of Dyved, and that is why there are two traditions about his paternity and why both are 'correct'.

This achievement however did not satisfy the Head of Annwvn ; he still regarded the Lord of Dyved as his enemy, in spite of the fact that he had enjoyed married life with Rhiannon for a year. He extended his enmity to *Pryderi*, his own son but ostensibly the son of Pendevig Dyved, and persecuted him in childhood and in manhood (the *Rape* of *Pryderi* as a child and his *Rape* as a young man are obviously different versions of the same original). First of all, he stole *Pryderi*, when he was only three nights old, from his mother's bed and kept him for some time. In the present account he did this by means of a substitution trick, by making *Pryderi* change places with a newly-born foal, but this, as we shall show later, is an extraneous addition to the *Pryderi* Saga, and belongs properly to the Myth of Rhiannon herself as the Horse-Goddess, the Great Queen. He was restored to his mother by Teyrnnon (who in the *Myth of Rhiannon* was her own husband). All this in a confused form is the substance of the First Branch, *Pwyll*.

Pryderi spent his youth at the Court of Dyved, and when he grew up, conducted an attack upon Annwvn,

the traditional enemy of his house, of which a tantalizingly short account is given in a poem in the *Book of Taliesin*, and which originally constituted the second Branch, now called *Branwen*. He returned to the Upper-world victorious with the spoils of Annwvn, the chief of which was *Pair Pen Annwvn*, the Cauldron of the Head of Annwvn, but with only seven survivors of his army.

The second attack on Pryderi by the Head of Annwvn, or rather a second version of the same attack, is contained in the third Branch *Manawydan*. The Lord of Dyved was dead and Pryderi reigned in his place. Rhiannon, now a widow, married Manawydan vab Llŷr—this marriage is a later addition to be discussed in due course—and the three of them, together with Pryderi's wife Cigva, spent a happy time in Dyved, hunting and visiting their subjects. On one of these expeditions, the Head of Annwvn, acting under another of his guises, Llwyd vab Cilcoed, enticed Pryderi into the Other-world and Rhiannon after him and made them prisoners. So that he had now gained possession of his own son Pryderi and of Rhiannon, the woman whom he had so long desired and whom he had lost to the Lord of Dyved. During their absence in the Other-world, a great desolation lay upon Dyved ; all the inhabitants, all the flocks, disappeared, and the whole land was deserted except for the survivors of the small band, Manawydan and Cigva, Pryderi's wife. Manawydan sought all over the country for Pryderi and at last, through great perseverance, succeeded in seizing Llwyd vab Cilcoed's wife, and, using her as a hostage, forced Llwyd to restore Pryderi and Rhiannon. As soon as they were restored, Dyved again became a land of prosperity as of old.

In the Fourth Branch, *Math*, the feud is resumed. It does not require much reconstruction to show that the death of Pryderi in the Fourth Branch is brought about by the same malign influence of the Powers of the

Other-world. Pryderi had in Dyved a new kind of animal called *hobu* 'swine,' which he or his father had brought with him from *Annwn*. Now Gwydion of Gwynedd was a magician (and it must be remembered that possession of 'magic and enchantment' is a characteristic of Other-world beings) and, in his cupidity, had cast an envious eye on the swine of Dyved. He therefore visited Pryderi, and by means of a magic trick, stole the swine from him, and took them away on the long journey to Gwynedd. The next day Pryderi, having discovered the trick, followed him with an army and came up with him at a place not far from his court of *Caer Dathal* in *Arvon*. The armies of Dyved and Gwynedd began to fight, but Gwydion persuaded Pryderi to join in single combat with him, so that their subjects need not be killed for their sake. 'By means of his magic'—that is, by exercising his powers as an Other-world being—Gwydion overcame Pryderi and slew him. Thus the Fourth Branch contains the final episode in the Saga of Pryderi. It should be noted that Gwydion who is here the Other-world enemy has been introduced from the unrelated saga of *Llew Llawgyffes*, and has thus supplanted the traditional *Gwawl*.

The above is a bare resumé of the Saga of Pryderi as it appears to have been when, in one of its earlier forms, it provided the framework of the Mabinogion. Many of the connecting links, which are assumed in this resumé, have been lost in the Mabinogion as we have them, but there is still enough detail preserved to enable us to supply them without undue conjecture. Between the different sections of the full story, a vast number of unrelated stories and incidents have in the course of time been thrust by the story-tellers. The traditional *Life and Death of Pryderi* was thus utilized as a framework into which to fit other popular tales and traditions which were current in old Wales, in particular the unrelated Gwynedd cycle, *The Life and Death of Llew Llawgyffes*. In order to construct a more or less homogeneous and plausible whole, many new links were invented and many

old features omitted. The new links, which were often in themselves complete traditional tales were introduced in order to connect new material with old, and old features were omitted because the story-teller forgot them, or because they clashed with the later introductions.

It is possible that we may recognise in Welsh literature a reference to the Saga of Pryderi or to one of its constituent parts before it had developed into the Mabinogi. In the *Book of Taliesin*, written about 1275 but containing much older material, there is a poem called *Etmic Dinbych*, the 'Praise of Tenby'. This poem has been edited by Sir Ifor Williams,¹ who says that 'we can without hesitation place the date of the poem before 1200'. It seems to belong to a well-known series of poems in praise of *caers*, 'strongholds', 'princely residences', some of which are attributed to Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd, prince of Gwynedd, who died in 1170. Lines 41-47 read as follows; I give Sir Ifor Williams's text omitting his punctuation:

- 41 Aduwyn gaer yssyd ae kyffrwy kedeu
 oed meu y rydeu a dewisswn
 Ny lafaraf i deith reith ryscâtwn
 ny dyly kelenic ny wyppo hwn
 45 yscriuen brydein bryder briffwn
 yn yt wna tonneu eu hymgyffrwn
 pereit hyt pell y gell a treidwn.

Lines 44-5 are translated by Sir Ifor Williams: 'He merits no feast-gift who is ignorant of this. The writings of Britain were the chief objects of care'. The metre is a kind of *cyhydedd naw ban* with either nine or ten syllables to the line. The editor in his Introduction to *Etmic Dinbych* has rightly stressed the common confusion between *n* and *r*, as illustrated elsewhere in the poem, and it should be added that the combinations *ni* and *in* are the commonest source of error in all manuscripts, ancient and modern.

¹ THSC (1940), pp. 66-83.

Line 45, I suggest, furnishes an example of these very errors ; for *brydein* we should read *bryderi*—that is to say, in an earlier text *bryderi* was copied as *brydeni*, which a later copyist wrote as *brydein*, since *brydein* was a well-known word and *brydeni* unknown. It is possible that a further change was made and that the third word *bryder* was originally *brydein*. If so, the copyist, faced with two *brydeins*, changed the second to the common word most like it, *bryder*.

Line 45 would then read :

(*y*)scriuen bryderi brydein briffwn.

I tentatively translate these difficult lines as follows, using many of Sir Ifor Williams's suggestions, and incorporating the emendation suggested above :

A pleasant caer there is which (princely) gifts adorn,
 Mine were the liberties (there) which I should desire.
 I will not speak of (its) legal privilege, which I would
 observe,

(For) he who knows not this has no right to a bard's fee,
 (in) the manuscript [or writing] of Pryderi, supreme
 one of Prydain.

Where the waves make a roar about it,
 (Long may it last !) is the cell which I would visit.

As I understand this poem, the writer, probably a monk, will not specify the legal privilege of Tenby, because any bard who is worth his fee should know it, since a record of it is kept in the Book of Pryderi in a 'cell' on an island or peninsula ; this was most probably the ancient 'Celtic' monastery on Caldy Island. It need not be supposed that this book was actually the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, but it contained legends about Pryderi explaining why Tenby had its special privilege (*teith reith*). This privilege would be its own *Braint* of which we have other examples in the Laws and Charters as, for instance, the '*Braint* of the Men of Arvon'. On the analogy of these, the Privilege of Tenby would be a special form of precedence granted as the result of

some distinguished service to its lord in the past, and that service would be carefully recorded in all its details—which of course may have been pure legend invented *post hoc* to justify the *Braint*. Now Tenby (*Dinbych*), in the words of Sir John Lloyd, ‘was a stronghold of the lords of Dyved ages before the English learned to call it Tenby,’ and there is no historical justification for making Arberth the ‘chief court’ as it is named in *Pwyll*, since it was never the ‘chief court’ even of the Cantrev of Penfro, much less of the Kingdom of Dyved.¹ I suggest that Pryderi was a historical person or at least the legendary hero of Dyved to whom the myth of the Son of Rhiannon, Gwri or Gweir, became subsequently attached. This attachment was late in the development of the material, as both names Pryderi and Gwri, are assigned to the hero in *Pwyll*, and this would also account for the fact that Chrétien de Troyes and the Continental Arthurian Cycle make no mention of Pryderi in spite of his supreme importance in the Mabinogi.

Students of the Mabinogion must have been puzzled by the inconsequential ending of *Pwyll*. Pryderi had been restored to his parents by Teyrnnon, who says that there is no one living who will grieve as much as his (Teyrnnon’s) wife for losing him. Pwyll answers that he will reward him and maintain him and his *cyvoeth* (i.e. his property, including lands and retainers). Then there is evidently a lacuna in the text—‘if he will be, . . . it is more right that he should maintain thee rather than I.’ I cannot think that ‘if he will be’ refers to *gwr mwyn*, ‘kind man’ eight lines above, and in any case, *iawnach* ‘more right’ is rather a strong term. Pwyll then goes on to say: ‘and if that be thy counsel and that of these gentlemen, since thou has brought him up till now, we will place him on fosterage with Pendaran Dyved henceforth and be ye companions and fosterparents to him’ . . . And so the child was entrusted to Pendaran Dyved, and ‘the gentlemen of the country joined company with him.’

¹ It is not certain that this Arberth was the place now known as Narberth. Prof. David Williams informs me that there is another Arberth in North Pembrokeshire.

I do not pretend to understand that portion of the narrative where I have suggested a lacuna, but it is clear from the rest that it was important to include in the story the fact that traditionally Pryderi was not brought up at Arberth but somewhere else, in the domain of Pendaran Dyved, and *that the men of that region had a special part in his upbringing*. I shall later suggest that Pendaran Dyved was actually the title of the quasi-historical Pryderi's father in an earlier version of the story ; at present I shall content myself with the suggestion that we have here the tradition according to which the men of Pendaran Dyved's domain won their *Braint* referred to in the poem *Etmic Dinbych*, by joining in the fosterage of Pryderi at the Chief Court of Dyved in Tenby.

It will be noticed that the author goes out of his way to emphasize two facts : (a) that Gwri had been brought up by Teyrnon, *whose son he was supposed to be*,¹ (b) that Pryderi was brought up by Pendaran Dyved with the help of his retainers. All this is devised, as we shall see, to reconcile three conflicting traditions, (a) that Pryderi's father was the ruler of Dyved, (b) that his father's name or title was *Pendaran Dyved*, and (c) that Gwri's father was Teyrnon.

¹ See p. 99.

II

PWYLL I

The Conception of the Hero.

THE First Branch of the Mabinogi is known¹ as *Pwyll Pendevic Dyvet*,² 'Pwyll, the Lord of Dyved,' and describes the meeting of Pwyll and Arawn, King of Annwvn—this being the usual term in Welsh for the Other-world—and how Pwyll and Arawn changed forms so that Pwyll became for a year King of Annwvn. The story proceeds to relate how Pwyll met Rhiannon in magical circumstances (*y mae yno ryw ystyr hut*), and how they fell in love with each other ; how a former suitor of Rhiannon won her from Pwyll at the wedding feast, and how Pwyll finally outwitted him by means of a magic trick, and regained Rhiannon. In due time a son, Gwri, was born to Rhiannon, but he was mysteriously snatched from his mother's bed. Pwyll's subjects insisted that Rhiannon had destroyed her son, and Pwyll was forced to punish her. Her punishment was to carry on her back all visitors to the court. The child was later found substituted for a foal and rescued by Teyrnnon, the owner of the foal, in another part of the country, and restored to his parents amid much rejoicing. Rhiannon was vindicated and the child *now renamed Pryderi*, was brought up not by his father Pwyll but by Teyrnnon, and kept in fosterage by yet another, Pendaran Dyvet.

It is now necessary to make a fuller summary of the first part of *Pwyll* (*Pwyll I*) which, by omitting the literary orna-

¹ The different Branches have no title in the manuscript.

² In modern orthography, *Pwyll Pendefig Dyfed*. It should be noted that modern *f* in Welsh = *v*, and that, to avoid confusion, this sound will be represented by *v* throughout this work. The sound *f* is represented in Modern W. by *ff*.

mentation, may give, in outline, the main features of the story.

Pwyll, the Lord (*pendevig*) of Dyved, went to hunt in Glyn Cuch. During the hunt he lost his companions, and just as he was reaching a clearing with his hounds, he beheld another pack of hounds pulling down a stag; he had never seen hounds like them, they were a pure white, with red ears. He drove the strange pack away and baited his own pack on the stag. While he was doing this, a stranger on a great dark-grey horse rode up and after upbraiding him for his discourtesy in driving away his (the stranger's) pack, he threatened him with dishonour of the value of a hundred stags. Pwyll offered atonement and the stranger then declared himself to be Arawn, King of Annwvn, that is the Other-world; 'a crowned King am I in the country from which I hail'. He named the atonement, namely that Pwyll should change forms with him and go in his place to Annwvn so that he might fight against Arawn's neighbour and enemy Havgan, 'a king in Annwvn', and deliver him from Havgan's *gormes*.¹ As an inducement he should have 'the fairest woman thou hast ever seen to sleep with thee every night.' In a year's time, Arawn was to meet Havgan 'on the ford'; he ordered Pwyll to go there in his stead and give Havgan one blow only; that would kill him, but if he gave more than one, he would recover.

No account is given of the actual changing of forms as arranged but when Pwyll had been escorted by Arawn to Annwvn, all Arawn's subjects accepted him without question as their own lord. In Annwvn was the most beautiful court of all the courts of the world, and the queen was the 'fairest woman that anyone had seen.' They sat at table '*in this manner, the queen on one side of*

¹ *Gormes* in Modern Welsh means 'oppression'. In older Welsh it normally denotes 'oppression by an alien race or conqueror', and specifically 'oppression from Annwvn' as in the well-known instance of the Coraniaid in *Lludd a Llevelys*.

him and the earl, he thought, on the other side.' When they went to bed, he turned away from her, 'and whatever loving kindness there was between them during the day, there was not on any night till the end of the year anything different from what there was on the first night.'

Pwyll is *not once* referred to by name in this latter part, from the time he starts for Annwvn till Arawn gives him back his own form at the end of his stay in Annwvn. The protagonist is referred to either simply as 'he' or 'the man who was in Arawn's place.'

At the end of the year, he and Havgan with their armies met at the ford, but a knight arose and suggested that the matter be left between the two kings. So it was arranged, and the two fought on horseback and '*the man who was in Arawn's place*' overthrew Havgan, giving him a mortal blow. 'Lord,' said Havgan 'what claim hast thou on my death? I made no demand of thee; neither knew I cause for thee to slay me.' He asked him therefore to give him another blow so as to kill him, but his request was refused. Then '*the man who was in Arawn's place*' summoned Havgan's men to do homage to him, and by the next day, 'the two kingdoms were under his rule.' Then he met Arawn at the appointed place in Glyn Cuch, and Arawn gave him back his own form. 'And on account of his sojourn in Annwvn and bringing the two kingdoms together *he was no longer called Pwyll the Pendevig of Dyved, but henceforth he was called Pwyll Head of Annwvn.*'

It will be seen from the above outline that there is no connection between Part I of *Pwyll* and Part II in their present form. Part I describes one independent incident in the life of the Lord of Dyved, which has no connection, whether stated or implied, with the latter portion beyond the fact that the same protagonist appears in both. It is in cases of this kind that the comparative lateness of our

manuscripts is mostly to be regretted, since it may be supposed that the arrangement of paragraphs and illumination, as in the notable instance of *Peredur*,¹ did at one time serve to mark and separate stories of different provenance.

There are, however, some indications to show that *Pwyll I* was at one period in the development of the Mabinogion an independent unit or indeed an independent Branch; it was probably reduced to its present position in order to preserve the traditional number of *four* Branches, because two of them, namely *Pwyll II* and *Manawydan* deal with the same theme, the Rape of Pryderi. The significance of this change in the position of the different Branches, will, I hope, emerge during the course of this study, but meanwhile we may remind ourselves of the present division of the Four Branches :

- I. 1. *Pwyll* Part i.
2. *Pwyll* Part ii.
- II. 3. *Branwen*.
- III. 4. *Manawydan*.
- IV. 5. *Math*.

Now the second portion of *Pwyll* begins with the formula *A threigylgueith yd oed yn arberth priflys idaw*, 'And on a day he was in Arberth, [which was] chief Court of his,' an exact duplication of the latter half of the introduction to Part I—'Pwyll, Pendevig Dyved, was lord of the Seven Cantrevs of Dyved, *and on a day he was in arberth [which was] chief Court of his.*' ; in short, both portions begin with the same introductory formula. Further, Arberth is named anew in the second portion as if it had not been named before, whereas, as *Pwyll* is now constituted, the explanation that it was the chief Court of Dyved had already been given. From these facts, namely (a), the absence of any plot connexion between the two portions ; (b) the introductory formula at the head of the second portion ; (c) the description of Arberth as if it had not been before named, we are justified in supposing that the first portion of *Pwyll* was once an independent tale.

¹ See Thurneysen, ZCP, pp. 185 ff.

That is to say, either *Pwyll II* was joined to *Pwyll I* or *Pwyll I* to *Pwyll II* during the later stages in the development of the Mabinogion. Since *Pwyll I* contains the *Compert* of Pryderi or rather of Gwri, his 'Conception Story,' and since *Pwyll II* duplicates that part of the saga which is also related in *Manawydan*, the Rape of Pryderi, we are justified in assuming that at one stage the First Branch of the Mabinogi was *Pwyll I* and that either *Pwyll II*, or *Manawydan*, a variant on the same theme, was the Second Branch.

If, then, as it is maintained above, the Four Branches are based on different incidents in the life of a hero, Pryderi, what kind of tale is *Pwyll I*, which deals with an adventure of Pwyll before the birth of his son Pryderi? How does it concern Pryderi? Pryderi himself does not appear in this preliminary portion, nor is he, so to speak, adumbrated. The first mention of him, his birth, is not made till we are well in *Pwyll II*, after a detailed description of the meeting of his father and mother.

A comparison, however, of *Pwyll I* with its Irish analogy or rather its Irish counterpart, the *Conception of Mongán*, shows that *Pwyll I* was meant to be a *Compert*, that is, a 'Conception' story, one of the recognised forms into which the Irish Sagas were divided. Before we proceed any further it will be necessary to give the main version of this Irish tale, CM. in full.

CM. *The Conception of Mongán*.¹

'Fiachna Lurga, the father of Mongán, was sole king of the province. He had a friend in Scotland, to wit, Aedán, the son of Gabrán. A message went from him to Aedán. A message went from Aedán to him that he would come to his aid. He was in warfare against the Saxons. A terrible warrior was brought by them for the death of Aedán in the battle. Then Fiachna went across. He left his queen at home. While the hosts were fighting in Scotland, a noble-looking man went to his wife in his stronghold in Rathmore of Moylinny. At the

¹ Nutt and Meyer, *The Voyage of Bran*, Vol. 1, p. 44 ff.

time he went there were not many in the stronghold. He asked the woman to arrange a place of meeting. The woman said there were not in the world possessions or treasures, for which she would do anything to disgrace her husband's honour. He asked her whether she would do it to save her husband's life. She said that if she were to see him in danger and difficulty, she would help him with all that lay in her might. He said she should do it then, "for thy husband is in great danger. A terrible man has been brought against him on (against) whom they cannot [prevail], and he will die by his hand. If we, I and thou, make love, thou wilt bear a son thereof. That son will be famous ; he will be Mongán. I shall go to the battle which will be fought tomorrow at the third hour, so that I shall save him, and I shall vanquish the warrior before the eyes of the men of Scotland. And I shall tell thy husband our adventures, and that it is thou that hast sent me to his help."

It was done thus. When army was drawn up against army, the hosts saw something—a noble-looking man before the army of Aedán and Fiachna. He went towards Fiachna in particular, and told him the conversation with his wife the day before, and that he had promised to come to his help at that hour. Thereupon he went before the army towards the other, and vanquished the soldier. And the battle was routed before Aedán and Fiachna.

And Fiachna returned to his country. And the woman was pregnant and bore a son, even Mongán son of Fiachna. And he thanked his wife for what she had done for him, and she confessed all her adventures. So that this Mongán is a son of Manannán mac Lir, though he is called Mongán son of Fiachna. For when he went from her in the morning he left a quatrain with Mongán's mother, saying :

"I go home,
The pale pure morning draws near :
Moninnán son of Ler
Is the name of him who came to thee." "

There is another more complex version of this incident ; it will be sufficient to give a fairly full summary of this version, which we shall call CMD.

CMD. *The Conception of Mongán and Dub-Lacha's Love for Mongán.*¹

' Once upon a time Fiachna Finn went from Ireland to Lochlann,² where Eolgarg Mór was then king, and there he found great respect and love and honour. He had not been there long when the King of Lochlann fell ill, and his physicians told him that nothing could cure him except a red-eared shining-white cow which was to be boiled for him. This cow was found in the possession of Caillech Dub (Black Hag). She refused to give the cow except under condition that Fiachna should become security. Now this was the hour and time that messengers came for Fiachna Finn, the son of Baetán, and he went with those messengers, and took the kingship of Ulster, and was king for one year.

One day Fiachna found the hag outside his *dún* demanding her security. She told him that the King of Lochlann had not paid for the cow as arranged. Fiachna offered to pay a price on his behalf but she refused. After much bargaining, the hag said, " if all the kine of the province of Ulster were given to me, I would not take them, until thou come thyself to make war upon the king of Lochlann."

Then Fiachna took the nobles of Ulster to attack Lochlann. The King of Lochlann sent venomous sheep against them, and for three days three hundred of Fiachna's warriors were killed by the sheep each day. Fiachna prepared to go and fight against the sheep in spite of the protest of his men. While they were dis-

¹ *Op. cit.* I, pp. 70-84.

² Welsh *Llychlyn*. In older Irish literature, Lochlann denotes the Other-world, generally the Other-world over the water. In later Irish and in Welsh literature it became identified with the land of the Scandinavian invaders, but this identification is not earlier than the 12th century. See Nutt, *Waifs and Strays*, (Arg. Ser.) ii, 485.

cussing the matter, they saw a tall warrior coming towards them. He wore a green cloak of one colour, and a brooch of white silver in the cloak over his breast, and a satin shirt next his white skin. A circlet of gold around his hair, and two sandals of gold under his feet. The warrior offered to keep the sheep from him if Fiachna gave him "that ring of gold on thy finger as a token for me, when I go to Ireland to thy wife to sleep with her . . . It shall be none the worse for thee ; for a glorious child shall be begotten by me there, and from thee he shall be named, even Mongán the Fair (*Finn*), son of Fiachna the Fair. And I shall go there in thy shape, so that thy wife shall not be defiled by it. And I am Manannán, son of Ler, and thou shalt seize the kingship of Lochlann and of the Saxons and Britons." So it was agreed and the strange warrior went to Ireland and in the shape of Fiachna himself he slept with Fiachna's wife, and in that night she became pregnant. On that day the sheep were destroyed and Fiachna seized the kingship of Lochlann and of the Saxons and Britons. Fiachna then paid the Black Hag and returned into Ireland from Lochlann and found his wife pregnant, and, when her time came, she bore a son. When Mongán was three nights old, Manannán came for him and took him with him to bring him up in the Land of Promise, and vowed that he would not let him go back into Ireland before he were twelve years of age.'

The rest of this account concerns Fiachna's love for Dubh-Lacha and appears to be a mixture of an earlier story with many later elements, due presumably to Christian influence. In fact, the story proceeds very much like one of the Welsh Mabinogion, and the descriptions contain precisely the same clichés.

It will be seen that the main difference between the two versions, CM and CMD is contained in the Introduction. In CM this is of the simplest kind ; Fiachna has to go away from his home in order to deliver his friend from his enemy,

and that is all. In CMD there is a long Introductory Episode in which a reason is given why Fiachna has to leave his kingdom, namely the *geis*, the destiny which the Black Hag swears upon him. Both Introductions have this in common, that Fiachna leaves his own home, and the King of the Other-world contrives to take Fiachna away from his wife so as to leave her unprotected when he, the King of the Other-world, should visit her. It is not necessary for our present purpose to enquire which of these two Introductions is the original ; it is sufficient to suggest that CMD contains relics of an additional independent story, manipulated and adapted to fit into the framework of the main theme, just as the story of the Fairy Hunt is fitted into the framework of *Pwyll I*. Such adaptations are characteristic of the *Four Branches* in general, as this enquiry will show, as well as of the Irish tales.

After the Introduction the two versions CM and CMD are so similar that they can be safely treated as simple variations of the same original. Significant details, that is, details which are essential to the plot, which appear in one only, can be used to supplement the other. The basic story of the *Conception of Mongán*, then, of which CM and CMD are versions, would run as follows in summary (CMS).

CMS

Fiachna Finn was King of Ireland and Manannán mac Lir was King of the Other-world or Lochlann. Manannán was in love with Fiachna's wife and this is the ruse by which he was enabled to lie with her with her husband's consent. By a trick he compelled Fiachna to make war upon him, and because he was King of the Other-world and had therefore control of all 'magic and enchantment', Fiachna was in danger of defeat and death. When things were at their worst, he appeared before Fiachna on the battle-field as a tall warrior marvellously clad. He offered to help Fiachna to defeat his enemy, who was of course Manannán himself, for a consideration, namely that they should

change forms and that Manannán should go to Ireland to Fiachna's court in Fiachna's form and sleep with Fiachna's wife. He said 'I shall go there in thy shape so that thy wife shall not be defiled by it.' So it was agreed, and Fiachna in Manannán's form was able to conquer his enemy and seize the kingship of Lochlann. At the same time Fiachna's wife became pregnant by Manannán in Fiachna's form.

Thus the child Mongán born to Fiachna's wife was the son of Manannán though he was also the son of Fiachna, because he was begotten by Manannán in Fiachna's form. Then Manannán came and stole his son Mongán when he was three nights old and took him to the Other-world where he kept him for twelve years.

There can be no doubt about the point of this legend. Whatever may be its ultimate origin, it is here utilised to explain two contradictory traditions which were well known to Irishmen at the time, namely :

- (a) That Mongán was the son of Fiachna.
- (b) That Mongán was the son of Manannán mac Lir.

Whether these two paternities of Mongán represent two separate versions of his history, or whether this double paternity is an original and necessary feature of the Mongán story it will be unnecessary for us to decide. It has, however, an important bearing on our inquiry, because *Pwyll I* is nothing but a confused version of the same incident as related in Welsh to a Welsh audience, concerning the Conception of their regional hero, Pryderi, who was the son of the Head of Annwvn, begotten by him in the form of the Lord of Dyved. In other words, the Welsh tale is based on a tradition which involved a double paternity for the hero and in which the explanation of the apparent impossibility corresponded in all essential details to the Irish version. In order that these two tales, the Irish and the Welsh, may be compared they are set out here in parallel columns :

Mongán

- (a) Fiachna is King of Ireland.
- (b) Manannán mac Lir is King of Lochlann, the Other-world.
- (c) Manannán is in love with Fiachna's wife and wishes to lie with her.
- (d) In order to bring this about Manannán contrives war between Fiachna and the King of the Other-world.
- (e) Fiachna has no prospect of conquering the King of Lochlann owing to his having Other-world powers.
- (f) Manannán appears to Fiachna as a tall warrior, beautifully clad.
- (g) Manannán has previously contrived to place Fiachna in a position of peril (*See d*).
- (h) Manannán offers to conquer Fiachna's enemy on his behalf.

Pwyll

- (a) Pwyll is Pendevig of Dyved.
- (b) Arawn is King of Annwvn the Other-world.
- (c) (This section is missing in *Pwyll I*, but as we shall see is present in *Pwyll II*).
- (d) Arawn is at war with 'another' King of Annwvn, Havgan.
- (e) Arawn has no prospect of conquering Havgan, because Havgan uses magic against him.
- (f) Arawn appears to Pwyll as a huntsman on a great horse accompanied by the most beautiful hounds in the world.
- (g) He has so contrived that Pwyll appears to have insulted him by baiting his hounds on Annwvn's quarry.
- (h) Pwyll must atone for the insult. The only atonement which Arawn will accept is that Pwyll shall go to Annwvn to conquer Arawn's enemy on his behalf.

Mongán

- (i) In order to do this Manannán and Fiachna must change forms.
- (j) Manannán says 'I shall go there (to Ireland) in thy shape so that thy wife shall not be defiled by it.'
- (k)
- (l) Fiachna in Manannán's form conquers his enemy.
- (m) Fiachna seizes the kingdom of Lochlann.
- (n) Manannán in Fiachna's form sleeps with Fiachna's wife.
- (o) In time she bears a son called Mongán.
- (p) Fiachna returns to his court and thanks his wife for all she has done for him.
- (q) 'She confesses to him all her adventures.'

Pwyll

- (i) In order to do this Arawn and Pwyll must change forms.
- (j) Arawn says 'I will put thee in my place in Annwvn with the fairest wife you have ever seen to sleep with you and you will have my form and appearance.'
- (k) Pwyll goes to Annwvn in Arawn's form.
- (l) Pwyll in Arawn's form meets Havgan at the ford and conquers him by following the advice which had been given him by Arawn.
- (m) Pwyll seizes Havgan's kingdom and 'unites the two kingdoms.'
- (n) Pwyll in Arawn's form sleeps with Arawn's wife.
- (o) (In *Pwyll II*, Pwyll's wife bears a son, *Gwri*).
- (p) Arawn returns to his court and in conversation with his wife she tells him how much he owes to Pwyll for his forbearance.
- (q) Pwyll's wife tells him 'all her adventures.'

*Mongán**Pwyll*

(r)

(r) Pwyll returns to his court and finds that Arawn has governed well in his absence. 'It is right for you' he says to his courtiers, 'to thank the man who was with you, and that is how the adventure was'.

(s)

(s) Because of Pwyll's success in Annwvn his title of Pendevig Dyved was changed to that of Pen Annwvn.

(t) Manannán comes and takes Mongán away when he is three nights old into the Land of Promise.

(t) (Gwri is taken away when he is three nights old. This incident forms the latter part of *Pwyll II.*)

A comparison of the two columns printed above will show that, in spite of apparent contradictions, the Welsh *Pwyll*, on the one hand, and the Irish CM and CMD on the other, are variations of an identical original. It is also clear that the two Irish stories are nearer the source than the Welsh. While the motivisation of the former is obvious and logical, in the *Pwyll* version, on the other hand, we find only an insignificant motive for its complicated plot, namely, to show how the man who was called Pwyll Pendevig Dyved came later to be called Pwyll Pen Annwvn; this is specifically mentioned, and it is to this end alone that the narrative is apparently contrived. The dramatically related incident of the hounds leads naturally to the form-changing, but after that the plot goes completely astray. The eloquent description of the Other-world scenery and the account of the

relations between Pwyll and Arawn's wife, as they are in *Pwyll*, are adventitious, and bear no relation to the motive, or to what should logically be the plot.

It is, of course, easy to see where the Welsh version has diverged from the original source as represented by the Irish versions, but I think we can go further and find the reason for the divergence in the mysterious treatment of the name and title of Pwyll. In all other references to him in Welsh literature, as for instance in the famous *Preiddeu Annwn*,² 'The Spoils of Annwn', in the Book of Taliesin, he is not known as *Pwyll Pendevig Dyved*, and there is every reason to suppose that his genuine title was *Pen Annwn*. How then did he come to appear here as *Pwyll Pendevig Dyved*, 'Pwyll the Lord of Dyved'?

The key is to be found in a sentence in CM :

'So that this Mongán is a son of Manannán mac Lir though he is called Mongán, son of Fiachna.'

If we translate these names into their Welsh equivalents we have :

'So that this child Gwri is a son of Pwyll Pen Annwn though he is called Pryderi son of Pendevig Dyved.'

When the significance of *Pwyll I* became obscured—that is to say, when it was no longer known that the motive of the story was to show how Pryderi-Gwri could rightly satisfy two traditions, namely that he was the son of Pwyll Pen Annwn and that he was the son of the Lord of Dyved, it became necessary to harmonize the divergent traditions in some other way, that is, to supply some kind of answer to the question,—'How is it that Pryderi is said to have succeeded his father as Lord of Dyved when he was notoriously the son of the Head of Annwn?' The question was answered by making the Lord of Dyved and the Head of Annwn into *one* person under *two* names, and this was achieved by manipulating the account of the visit to Annwn. To quote the Mabinogi :

¹ For a discussion see *The Spoils of Annwn* by Roger S. Loomis (PMLA. LVI, pp. 887 ff).

‘And on account of his tarrying that year in Annwn and ruling there so successfully and bringing the two kingdoms into one through his bravery and prowess his name became disused on Pwyll Pendevig Dyved and he was called Pwyll Pen Annwn thenceforth.’

We shall notice later the substitution of the name Pryderi for that of Gwri.

It is to be noted in this connection that Pwyll’s new name seems to have preserved the element *Pen* from the old name. Even then the ‘author’ of the Mabinogi, or perhaps one ought to say one of the numerous series of narrators, found himself confronted with a further difficulty. Apparently an older story tradition gave as Pryderi’s father ‘*Pendaran Dyved*’, which may perhaps be translated ‘The Great Lord of Dyved.’ The narrator, having already bestowed the title *Pendevig* on the King of Dyved, found it difficult to square this with the other tradition that Pryderi’s father was called ‘*Pendaran Dyved*.’ So, in order to surmount this further difficulty, he found himself compelled to introduce a new character, Pendaran Dyved, into the end of *Pwyll II*, where the naming of Pryderi is described :

“‘What is the name?’” said Pendaran Dyved. “Gwri Wallt Eurin is what we have placed upon him.”
 “Pryderi,” said Pendaran Dyved, “is what his name shall be.”

Up to this point in the story the child has been brought up by Teyrnnon (yet another of his reputed fathers as we shall see) but Pendaran Dyved now delivers this dogmatic judgment, the meaning of which is quite incomprehensible unless we suppose that in one form of the legend he had a much more important position than in *Pwyll*. Pwyll says to Teyrnnon :

“‘If that is a counsel of thine and of the nobles here present, since you have reared him till now, *we will place him on fosterage with Pendaran Dyved henceforth*’ . . . and then the child was given to Pendaran Dyved and the nobles of the court shared the fosterage with him.’

Thus a questioning critic might object, 'But according to the story as I have heard it, Pryderi's father was Pendaran Dyved and not Pwyll Pendevig Dyved,' and the author of the *Mabinogi of Pwyll* could then reply, 'There is certainly such a tradition, but the explanation is quite simple,—Pendevig was his father and Pendaran his foster-father.'

The next problem we have to consider is the name and position of Arawn. Arawn must be put in a special class among the names of the Mabinogion, since it is not to be found elsewhere in the older literature. One need make no exception of the reference in the Third Series of the Triads, which, as a whole, are probably no older than Iolo Morganwg (1746-1826). Arawn is also mentioned in a kind of ghost story in the nineteenth century collection *Ystên Sioned*, which describes how at a certain place a cry is heard, *Hir yw aros Arawn*—'It is a long time to wait for Arawn.' We can safely conclude that, to say the least, he is not, as a mythological personage, comparable in importance with Pwyll Pen Annwvn, who figures in a main incident of Welsh legend as well as in the first Branch of the Mabinogi.

But though Arawn is unknown except in this particular Mabinogi he, however, and not Pwyll may have been the mortal hero in an older form, under whatever name he was known. A study of that portion of *Pwyll I* which has been quoted above will show that the author was conscious of the fact that, somewhere or other in his narrative, Arawn and Pwyll had got so mixed together that he was unable to disentangle them.

Let us consider, first of all, the respective roles assigned to the Other-world visitant and to the mortal. In CMS the mortal is being defeated by his Other-world enemy and therefore must have the help of an Other-world ally to equalise matters ; in short, the Other-world being can do what the mortal cannot, which, of course, is exactly what one would expect. In *Pwyll*, however, the roles are reversed. Arawn 'the King of Annwvn' cannot defeat Havgan, a king 'from Annwvn,' and therefore he must have the

help of a mortal ally, the Lord of Dyved, against his immortal compeer ! If we did not possess the Irish version in *Compert Mongáin*, we might find it hard to solve the difficulty caused by this absurdity, but that story, being completely logical, gives us the key.

Manannán lays an elaborate plot in order to persuade Fiachna to allow him to assume Fiachna's form ; Fiachna consents because naturally as Fiachna, a mere mortal, he cannot defeat a being from the Other-world. But Manannán's motive was not kindness towards Fiachna ; on the contrary, he himself in another guise was certainly the demon enemy who harried Fiachna. His motive of course was that he desired Fiachna's wife and knew that he could overcome her virtue only by appearing as her husband. That was Manannán's motive in the story, but the basic reason in the author's mind when he utilised the incident was to be able to prove that Mongán, reputed to be the son of Fiachna, was also the son of Manannán. Whether there were in Ireland two traditions about the paternity of Mongán, one making him the son of Fiachna and the other the son of Manannán, I do not know ; if there were, then, the Irish author or one of the authors made use of a well-established legend of an Other-world visitant having intercourse with a mortal woman to resolve a contradiction in the traditional pedigrees.

When we come to compare the Welsh version with the Irish, we are forced to conclude that in *Pwyll* there has been an exchange of roles which took place either during the evolution of the cyfarwyddyd or in the literary version composed by the author. It was not Pen Annwvn, the Head of Annwvn, who was unable to overcome Havgan, but the Pendevig of Dyved ; Pen Annwvn had contrived it all, so that he could lie with the wife of Pendevig Dyved. Traces of the substitution, overlaid as it is with the most skilful literary ornamentation, nevertheless appear in many places in the narrative :

(1) After the end of column 4 in the *White Book*, where the compact is made to change forms, up to the middle of column

9, where Pwyll is given his own form,—that is to say, during the whole duration of the substitution, *Pwyll is not once mentioned by name*. Now it is incredible that the protagonist in the action described should be thus nameless in every sentence in the most vital portion of the story whereas the newcomer is regularly named. There may be examples of such a strange omission in modern or ancient narratives, though I know of none, but to quote them would be useless, since not a single instance can be adduced from the Four Branches themselves or from the associated tales. The only possible explanation is that the original protagonist was not the Lord of Dyved, and that the cyvarwydd or author was so conscious of the resulting confusion that he attempted to achieve some shadow of coherence *by deliberately omitting names*.

(2) The combat against Havgan, the Other-world enemy, is thus described : ‘ And thereupon the two kings approached each other in the middle of the ford to come to close quarters. At the first attack, *the man who was in Arawn’s place*, struck Havgan.’ After the description of the fight, the narrative goes on : ‘ My true lieges ’ *said Havgan*, ‘ bear me hence . . . ’ ‘ And my lieges ’ *said the man who was in Arawn’s place* ‘ take your counsel.’ Now Havgan’s conqueror according to the *Pwyll* version should be Pwyll Pendevig Dyved, the actual hero and protagonist, whose name is at the head of the Branch, who plays the chief part in the action, and who is, of course, better known to the reader than any other person in the narrative. Is it credible that he, of all men, should be described as the ‘ man in Arawn’s place ’ as if Arawn were the hero whose name was known and the other a complete stranger ? It is clear that, whoever leads the action in the rest of the tale, here at least he is a newcomer, and unlike his named opponent, he is the intervening stranger.

(3) The end of the Duel at the Ford presents an important clue to the mystery. It will be remembered that the King of Annwvn, when ‘ briefing ’ the Lord of Dyved for the fight with Havgan, says : ‘ And one blow only give thou to him ;

he will die of that. *And though he ask thee to give a second, give it not, for all he entreat thee.* For all [the blows] which I used to give him in addition, he fought me as well as ever on the morrow.' The Lord of Dyved follows this counsel. After he has been overthrown from his horse, Havgan says : ' Lord, what claim wouldst thou have on my death ? I made no claim against thee, and besides I knew of no reason for thee to slay me, and for God's sake, since you have begun to slay me, make an end.' The Lord of Dyved (or rather ' the man in Arawn's place '), acting on his instructions, refuses him the second blow, and Havgan says : ' My true lieges, *bear me hence*, my death has been brought to pass.' So he is borne away by his men *while still alive*.

Ever since Gaston Paris in 1888 noted the correspondence between the Beheading Test in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the similar theme in the Irish *Bricriu's Feast*, Arthurian scholars have referred to this incident for confirmation of its original celticity. And rightly, because there is an element common to both, namely the ability of an Other-world being to regulate the conditions of his own ' death,' and by his ' magic ' to frustrate it ; this is the belief that underlies the ' Beheading Game ' as a Celtic theme. On the other hand, in an earlier version of the ancient tale which we are now discussing, the ancestor of *Pwyll*, this incident was not primarily an example of the Celtic ' magician's ' trick to surprise and possibly test his opponent as in *Sir Gawain*, but a device of the Other-world king necessary to ensure that the mortal prince who was temporarily in *one* of the king's numerous guises should not be undeceived as to the identity of his opponent but should go away convinced that he had slain his enemy. Note that he is carried away *before* his ' death.' At this stage Havgan's opponent had become a mortal as in *Pwyll*, but the teller of this version still recognised Havgan as the King of Annwvn in another guise according to tradition.

It is a common-place of Celtic tales that the Other-world being is a shape-shifting magician, and there are abundant examples in Irish and other stories of Celtic

provenance, where he appears to the hero in different guises as a preliminary to the main encounter, as for instance, in the great number of tales of the *Giant's Daughter* type where the Quester either has to fight a series of giants or is warned by them to keep away, before he enters the Giant's castle. All the scholars, without exception, who have studied this type of story are agreed that these accessory beings, whether they are enemies or appear under the guise of friendship, are manifestations of the magician himself, who is able to shift his shape at will. Havgan, the 'King from Annwvn' whom the Lord of Dyved is sent to fight is the actual 'crowned King of Annwvn' whom he has met hunting in Glyn Cuch; the combat at the ford is a mere pretence, since the only object of the trick was to get the Lord of Dyved away from his court so that the King of Annwvn might, in the Lord of Dyved's form, lie with his wife. The King, being an Otherworld being, is one of the immortals and *cannot be killed*, and if the Lord of Dyved were to go on fighting after the first onset, it would soon become evident that the fight was unreal; to guard, then, against that contingency the King of Annwvn directed the Lord of Dyved to stop fighting after the first blow, in spite of the fact that his enemy was still alive.

The change of form and appearance between Arawn and Pwyll was so well contrived that no one either in Dyved or in *Annwvn* knew that it had taken place; this is categorically asserted in the text. Yet it is clear that Havgan, the one person who should have been ignorant of the change, knew that it was Pwyll and not Arawn who was fighting him at the ford, since he appeals to him by saying 'What claim wouldst thou have on my death? I made no claim against thee, and besides I know of no reason for thee to slay me'. These words are intelligible only on the assumption that Havgan knew that his opponent was not Arawn but Pwyll in Arawn's form; there was ample reason for Arawn to kill him since they were supposed to be at war with each other, but the Lord of Dyved had no grievance against him. Havgan knew about the change because he himself was Arawn.

(4) A most significant indication of the original character of *Pwyll I* is the statement at the end. 'And because of his sojourn that year in Annwvn, and his reigning there so successfully, and bringing the two kingdoms into one through his bravery and prowess, *his name became disused on Pwyll, Lord of Dyved (Pendeig Dyved)*, [i.e. his name, *Pwyll Lord of Dyved*, fell out of use], and he was called Pwyll Head of Annwvn (Pen Annwvn) thenceforth'. That is to say, from time immemorial, namely ever since the events described in the Mabinogi took place, he was known in Wales as 'Pwyll Pen Annwvn' and he was only known as 'Pendeig Dyved' *before* these events. This of course can only mean that the Mabinogi purports to give the early history of a person known to Welsh tradition or 'history' specifically as Pwyll Head of Annwvn; it is categorically stated that 'his name of Pendeig Dyved fell out of use'; in other words, it was unknown to tradition. At the risk of wearisome reiteration, it must thus be insisted that Pwyll was the name of the Head of Annwvn and not of the Lord of Dyved. It is hardly necessary to add that, apart from this Mabinogi, Pwyll is unknown to Welsh tradition (including *Pwyll II*!) except as the Head of Annwvn.

From all these considerations—the comparison of *Pwyll I* with CMS and the omissions and anomalies in the text which I have described, only one conclusion is possible, that the Lord of Dyved was not Pwyll; that Pwyll was the Head of Annwvn and therefore the Lord of Dyved's enemy, and that the characters, and actions of the two main actors have been interchanged during the evolution of *Pwyll I*. I shall attempt at a later stage in this inquiry to prove that the name of the original hero of *Pwyll II* whose son is carried off by the Head of Annwvn had come down from the far-off tradition of pre-Christian times, long before Dyved became a Kingdom, long before it was over-run by the Goidels from Ireland, and certainly long before Wales as a political unit had come to being. I must now anticipate that inquiry, by saying that the hero of this episode in *Pwyll II* was Teyrnnon, the traditional husband of Rhiannon. This does *not* mean that

Teyrnnon was ever designated in any legend as Lord of Dyved, but that in a late stage in the development of the Mabinogi, the Teyrnnon-Rhiannon legend was localised in Dyved, with the consequent manipulation of names and roles involving the separation of the names of the original couple. Pwyll as the Head of Annwvn will become the object of further study in a future inquiry into the development of the Second Branch, *Branwen*.

From all that has been said above, it is now clear that the first part of *Pwyll* can have no meaning unless we assume that the roles of the Lord of Dyved and the Head of Annwvn have been reversed during the long development of the Mabinogi. Disentangling the strands of the puzzle is made all the more difficult by the fact that some features which originally belonged to the description of the Lord of Dyved still remain assigned to him in his new role, and this is also true of the description of the Head of Annwvn, but if we keep in mind the *Compert* type of story as found in the Irish CM and CMD and as summarised in CMS, we are now in a position to outline the original *Compert* of Pryderi, or rather of Gwri Gwallt Eurin, the child begotten by the Head of Annwvn in the form of the Lord of Dyved. Missing links in the narrative are placed in square brackets.

[The Lord (*Pendevig*) of Dyvet had married a beautiful woman from Annwvn.]¹ He was being attacked by the King of Annwvn [who coveted the Lord's wife] and was unable to overcome his enemy, since he was a mortal fighting against an Other-world being. One day he went hunting, and spent the first night at Pen Llwyn upon Bwya.² On the morrow he came to Glyn Cuch

¹ This comes from *Pwyll II*, and should logically have come first in the narrative.

² Such a detail as this is, of course, part of a later elaboration, but I have included it in order to point out that the WB. *pen llwyn diarwya* is due to an error in copying from an older MS. In O.W. of the period of the charters in the *Book of Llandav*, *diar* is the normal form of later *y ar*, which is the usual form in WB. The scribe in copying an old MS. and 'modernising' its orthography, neglected, in this instance, to change *diar* to *y ar*, just as he, or another, did in many instances in the first folios of *Kulhwch*, e.g. *dy wrth* (= *y wrth*; *dy arthur* (= *y arthur*), etc. As to *wya* this is certainly for *vuya*, or in the older orthography *uuya* or *vuya*, for the same representation of *vu* as *w* is found later in *Pwyll* itself (WB. col 16), 'a phei *uyaf*' for *vuyaf*, 'more' or, in RB orthography, *vuyaf*.

and set his hounds on a stag. Thereupon came a tall huntsman in dark grey, riding a great and terrible grey horse and with a pack of hounds with all the recognised marks of the Other-world on them.¹ The stranger drove away the Lord's hounds and baited his own hounds on the stag. The Lord of Dyved then rode up to the stranger, upbraided him for his gross discourtesy, and demanded his [legal] *sarhaed* or atonement for insult. He said that he was the Lord of Dyved and asked who the stranger was. The stranger declared that he was Pwyll Pen Annwvn, 'Pwyll Head of Annwvn', and said that he would willingly pay the Lord's *sarhaed*. 'And thus will I pay it' said he, 'there is a king in my country called Havgan who makes war upon you in Dyved; you are unable to conquer him, but I will fight him for you'. ['How can that be', said the Lord, 'since he will know that it is not I'?] 'I will [by my magic] change forms with you, so that no one will know that I am not you.' ['Yes', said the Lord, 'I will accept that as full atonement for the insult'] 'And what appointment have you to fight Havgan?' said Pen Annwvn. 'A year from tonight' said the Lord of Dyved, 'I am due to meet him at the ford, and do you go there in my stead and you shall have the fairest woman you have ever seen to sleep with you every night.' 'Gladly' said Pen Annwvn, 'and I shall be at your court in your form'. So it was done; the Lord of Dyved in the form of the Head of Annwvn was guided to Annwvn, and there he dwelt for a year, and Pwyll Pen Annwvn went to the court of Dyved at Arberth and lived there for a year, [and the Lord of Dyved's wife did not know that it was not her own husband who slept with her every night.] At the end of the year Pen Annwvn with the men of Dyved kept the appointment at the ford, but he told the men that they must keep away since the quarrel was a personal one, between him and Havgan.

¹ The Hunter of Annwvn, leading the Hounds of Annwvn, is well-known in Welsh folk-lore.

So the men of Dyved neither took part in the fight [nor saw any of it, and therefore did not know that the fight was unreal]. Then Penn Annwvn went back to Arberth, [met the Lord of Dyved], changed back their forms, and returned to Annwvn. [But during that year the Lord of Dyved's wife had conceived, and in due time bore a son who was called Gwri Gwallt Eurin.] [So that Gwri is the son of the Head of Annwvn and also the son of the Lord of Dyved, because he was begotten by the Head of Annwvn in the form of the Lord of Dyved.]

Such, then, was the original scheme or sequence of events from which *Pwyll I*, as recorded in the WB, was evolved, but it is necessary at this point to make two important reservations. First, we must not assume that a single *cyfarwyddyd* or document ever existed which merely recorded the logical sequence of events as described above without any extraneous additions. After all, the story of a Hero's adventures was never told except as an entertainment, and we know that no entertainment, even in modern times when historical accuracy is regarded as important, can be free from some sort of contamination, whether from analogous traditions or from deliberate additions and comments by the narrator. Even CM and especially CMD, which have preserved intact the original motive, have accumulated around them a great amount of adventitious detail. Secondly, it cannot be assumed that the Lord of Dyved, the father of Pryderi, the Hero of the Four Branches, ever appeared in a plain uncomplicated narrative such as we have sketched above. That is to say, the legend of the Other-world visitor's intrigue may have been applied to the Lord of Dyved at any intermediate stage in the evolution of the tradition, after the mythical Gwri had been identified with Dyved's legendary hero, Pryderi. On the other hand, we have no means of knowing that the basic form of the tradition was or was not originally attached to the Lord of Dyved. The motif itself is of great antiquity, and has persisted in legend from the time of Herodotus (*Hist.*, VI. 68-9) where the demi-god visits a

woman in the guise of her husband to the Vulgate account of the Conception of Arthur and the later French and English romances ; a large volume could be filled with analogies from these sources. These remarks from Nutt's *Voyage of Bran*, (II. p. 28) by a student of folk-lore who had *not* perceived that *Pwyll I* was an example of the type of tale discussed by him are to the point : ' Earlier than and underlying the heroic legends of Finn, Arthur and Mongán, I assume that among the Celtic-speaking inhabitants of these islands, Goidels and Brythons both, there was current a tale of a wonderchild, begotten upon a mortal mother by a supernatural father—reincarnated in him, or transmitting to him supernatural gifts and powers—associated with his father in the rule of that land of Faery to which he passes after his death. Such a tale would be a natural framework into which to fit the life story of a famous tribal hero.'

It will be noticed that in *Pwyll*, we have an example of such a ' fitting ' in process of development. It is not yet complete since it is the child Gwri and not Pryderi, who is ' fitted into the framework ', and Pryderi comes on the scene only by the clumsy expedient of changing the child's name.

Beside the complexities due to the interchange of roles between the Lord of Dyved and the Head of Annwvn, there are contaminations from at least two other sources. In columns 5-6 of WB there is an eloquent description of the court and halls of Annwvn ; this, of course, is only one of a long series of descriptions of the Other-world scenery found in all Welsh fairy tales as well as in the majority of the earlier and later Arthurian tales and *contes*. Indeed, the close verbal similarity of some of them to this portion of *Pwyll* gives rise to many further questions which we cannot discuss here.

The other is the long account of Pwyll's chastity and self-control when he slept every night with the Queen of Annwvn. This rather incongruous episode may be due to the confusion of the cyvarwydd or author in trying to reconcile the details of a story where the roles of the protagonist had been reversed and where the traditional version said explicitly that the

child born as a result of the adventure was the son of the Head of Annwvn and the wife of the Lord of Dyved. If there had been normal marital relations in Annwvn, the tradition would go astray since the child would be the son of the Lord of Dyved and the wife of the Head of Annwvn, and not the son of the Head of Annwvn and the wife of the Lord of Dyved. The cyvarwydd or author who was responsible for the interchange of roles found himself here in a difficulty, and resolved it by saying that there had been no intercourse between the mortal and the Other-world woman in Annwvn, and saying nothing at all about the relations between the Other-world King and the mortal's wife.

Further, the description of the Other-world feast as recorded in *Pwyll* has been contaminated by one of the later Arthurian tales or at least by the cyvarwyddyd on which it was based. In the account of the scene at the court of Annwvn when the Lord of Dyved presents himself in the form of the King of Annwvn, there occurs a puzzling incongruity: 'they sat at table in this manner, the queen on one side of him, *and the earl, he thought, on the other side*'. Where did this earl come from? This was not a title attached to a permanent official of any court in Wales at any period, so that we cannot here accept 'earl' as easily as we would accept a title denoting 'seneschal', or *penteulu*, 'head of the household' in such a connection. We can explain the intrusion of 'the earl' here only by supposing one of two alternatives: (1) that in an older version there was an earl, probably named as Arawn's enemy, who played a more or less important part in the story, or (2) that the presence of the earl is due to contamination with another tale of a type so well-known to the narrator that the name slipped inadvertently into a formula, describing a feast at court. We have, in fact, in the Welsh tales an incident of this kind, namely the description of Geraint's entertainment at the court of Earl Yniwl:

'Geraint sat between the grey man and his wife, and the maiden served them . . . After they had finished eating, Geraint kept conversing with the grey man . . .

[who said] " I owned . . . the castle which you saw ' . . . ' I lost it and a great earldom besides " ' . [He then described how a nephew of his made war on him. Next day Geraint defeated the 'Young Earl', his nephew, in a tournament and restored to Earl Yniwl his property]¹.

It will be seen how closely these incidents correspond to the similar theme in *Pwyll*. The general basic pattern is the story of a hero who meets a strange earl at his own court and later defeats the earl's enemy who, as in *Geraint*, may be another earl. There were probably in Welsh as in French and other languages, many narratives of which this situation was an integral feature. One may go so far as to suggest that when one of the later cyfarwyddon came to describe a duel in which the hero fights his host's enemy it was likely that the usual host, namely an old Earl, would be introduced.

¹ WB. fol. 394. Professor Loomis has proved that the Welsh *Geraint* is not based on Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec* but on an independent French *conte*, now lost, which was the common source of *Geraint* and *Erec*. See in particular his acute explanation of the Earl's name *Yniwl*. AT. 35.

III

PWYLL AND RHIANNON

WE have seen that the incidents recounted in *Pwyll I* were utilised to show how the Lord of Dyved became Pwyll Head of Annwvn ; this change of *name* was necessary to resolve the confusion which followed when the *roles* of the Lord of Dyved and the Head of Annwvn were interchanged. In *Pwyll II* the Lord of Dyved is henceforth referred to as 'Pwyll Pen Annwvn' *only*, and the name 'Pendevig Dyved' simply disappears from the narrative.

Pwyll II then proceeds without any reference to *Pwyll I* ; it is in form as well as in substance an independent 'branch' of the Mabinogi. As we have seen, the incidents in the first part of *Pwyll II*—the meeting of the Lord of Dyved (whom we can now, for the sake of clearness call by his borrowed name 'Pwyll') and Rhiannon, father and mother of the Hero of the Four Branches—should logically have preceded the incidents in *Pwyll I*.

The following is a short summary (MPR) of the first portion of *Pwyll II*.

MPR. *The Meeting of Pwyll and Rhiannon.*

Pwyll went to sit on the *gorsedd* (mound) of Arberth which was a 'fairy mound', [to use a later expression, or as the Irish would call it a *sidhe*]. He saw a woman on a great pale horse, riding with an even, unhurried gait. Pwyll sent one of his men on foot to ascertain who she was, but he was unable to overtake her. He then sent him on the same errand on the swiftest horse in his possession, but though the lady never varied her gait he was quite unable to overtake her. 'There is some magical meaning here', said Pwyll.

On the morrow they went again to the *gorsedd*, and again the swiftest horse spurred to his utmost speed failed to overtake her though her horse only walked. The next day, Pwyll himself rode after her but with the same result. Then Pwyll addressed her, and she stopped and said that she was Rhiannon daughter of Heveydd Hen, and that she was being forced to marry a man against her will ; the one she loved was Pwyll himself. She had come to offer herself to Pwyll. Pwyll was no less anxious to have her as his wife and it was arranged that in a year to that day there would be a marriage feast in Heveydd's court.¹

At the end of the year Pwyll went to Heveydd's court accompanied by a hundred knights, and at the feast he sat ' with Heveydd Hen on one side and Rhiannon on the other '. [Compare this with the analogous situation at the feast in Annwvn in *Pwyll I* where Pwyll sits between the queen and the earl]. A tall blonde man of royal aspect dressed in pali came in and said that he was a suppliant. Pwyll said he would grant any boon he should request. He then named as his boon ' the woman whom I love above all others and with whom you are to sleep tonight ; I want her and all the food and provision here '. Rhiannon then upbraided Pwyll for his folly. ' This is Gwawl vab Clud the man to whom they wanted to give me . . . but grant his request, and I will so arrange that he can never have me. I will give you a bag and he will ask for the food and provision. But that is not yours to give and I will give it to the household and hosts . . . As for me I will make a tryst to sleep with him a year from tonight, and be you there with this bag in the orchard with a hundred knights '. Acting on these instructions, Pwyll in a year's time returned to Heveydd's court for the wedding feast and asked as his boon enough food to fill

¹ I have used, for convenience, the terms ' wife ', ' marriage ', and ' marry ' but these are not in the text. Rhiannon simply says that ' they want to give me to a man against my will '. ' Sleeping with ' here as elsewhere in the Mabinogion is the phrase used when a marriage takes place.

the bag. Then a great number of court servants began to fill the bag, but as Rhiannon had foretold, the more food they cast into it, the emptier it was. 'Will it ever be full?' said the bridegroom Gwawl. 'No,' said Pwyll, 'unless a nobleman owning land and chattels puts his feet in it and says 'Enough'. 'You do so' said Rhiannon to Gwawl, who then put his feet in the bag. At once Pwyll turned him over in the bag and knotted the thongs on him. He sounded his horn and his men came from the orchard, and each one as he entered hit the bag with his staff or his foot and asked, 'What is here?' 'A badger,' they answered. The game which they played was 'Badger in the Bag' and that was when 'Badger in the Bag' was first played [i.e. this was the origin of the game]. After Gwawl had promised that he would never seek vengeance, and given sureties for his conduct, he was allowed to depart. And Pwyll and Rhiannon went together to Dyded.

It will be convenient to deal with this first portion of *Pwyll II*, the *Meeting of Pwyll and Rhiannon* (MPR) as a separate tale before we proceed to the later portion, *The Loss of Gwri and the Penance of Rhiannon*. MPR has so many analogies in nearly all European literatures that it is unnecessary to dwell at any length on this particular version of it, and I wish to remind you that we are not attempting to consider a question in folk-lore but to solve, if possible, a problem in storyology (if such a word is permissible),—how the *Mabinogi of Pwyll* was evolved and how it came to assume its present form. In general, the famous legend of which MPR is one version, describes how a mortal man meets an Other-world woman who has appeared from the Other-world or from Fairyland; how she imposes her own conditions upon him, and how they are married and have children. An obvious Welsh analogue is, of course, the story of Llyn y Van Vach,¹ but here and there, often in less well-known tales, nearly all the details found in *Pwyll II* can be

¹ Given in full by Rhys, CF, 2 ff. See also the author's *South Wales and the Marches*, 25-6.

matched. Wirt Sikes, for instance, gives the story of a Llangatog man who met a fairy on the Black Mountain. 'He then hastened his steps thinking to overtake her, but the faster he ran, the further he found himself behind her'.¹ The theme of the Fairy Mound (*Gorsedd*) with its magic properties and the meeting with the Other-world mistress is so common in the Celtic countries that it is only necessary to note that the version given in *Pwyll II* is quite normal except in one respect—the *Other-world visitor is on horseback*; we shall inquire later into the significance of this feature.

In the next portion of the narrative, the *Disguised Beggar* is a type of legend well-known and distributed all over Europe, but there are one or two points of special interest in *Pwyll*. It will be noticed that there is a definite duplication here, in accordance with the device usual in the Mabinogion of combining two contradictory traditions by including both in the narrative. The *Disguised Beggar* theme appears in European legend in two distinct forms :

Type A. A former lover of the bride turns up disguised as a beggar at the wedding of the Hero or Heroine or even at a subsequent feast. By means of a trick, or as the result of a game, or in fulfilment of a rash promise by the husband, he is enabled to carry off the wife.

Type B. The husband, or the chosen lover, has been away for some time and the wife is about to marry another against her own inclination. The husband or lover appears at the wedding-feast disguised as a beggar and by some kind of superior skill, such as stringing a bow or playing a harp, asserts his rightful position and claims his wife.

The former variation A is the formula in the many versions of the Abduction of Gwenhwyvar, wife of Arthur, by Melwas or Meleageant and of Iseult in the Tristan saga ; it seems to be the version characteristic of the Celtic stories. In many forms, the stranger proposes a game, with the wife and the provisions of the feast as the stakes to be

¹ *British Goblins*, 50.

won. The second variation B is not so common in ancient Celtic tradition but seems to have been popular at an early period in Europe ; the *Return of Odysseus* in the *Odyssey* is a clear example. But there are indications that even Homer was working on material which was so old that at least two distinct versions had grown side by side and become inseparable like Siamese twins ; in one of these the test was stringing the bow and in the other, shooting an arrow through the heft-holes of axes set in a line. We may discern the debris of yet two more versions where the climax was, respectively, the recognition of the Master by the old hound and the recognition by the old nurse.¹

MPR contains a rather clumsy combination of the two forms of the *Disguised Beggar* theme which we have described above—A, where Gwawl turns up at Pwyll's wedding, and B, where in a year's time Pwyll turns up at Gwawl's wedding. It will be noticed that this attempt at combination has involved the author or perhaps a previous cyfarwydd in some incoherences and in at least one wearisome re-iteration. When Pwyll first meets Rhiannon they are not immediately married, but Rhiannon *will have a wedding-feast ready in a year's time* at the court of Heveydd, her father.

When Pwyll presents himself at this feast, Gwawl steals Rhiannon from him but again the wedding of Gwawl and Rhiannon does not take place immediately but is postponed for a year. This time it is Pwyll who steals Rhiannon from Gwawl, but even then there is in the narrative an echo of still another year's postponement.

'Lord', said Pwyll to Heveydd, 'I will set out, by thy leave, for Dyved tomorrow.' 'Yea,' said Heveydd, 'God ease thy way before thee ; and *do thou name a tryst and time when Rhiannon shall follow thee.*' 'Between me and God,' said Pwyll then, 'we will travel hence together'. 'Is that thy will, lord?' said Heveydd. 'That is my will, between me and God', said Pwyll.

¹ An investigation of the composition of the *Odyssey* presents all the problems which the inquirer to the composition of the *Mabinogion* has to face. For an acute analysis of the material see *The Composition of Homer's Odyssey* by Professor W. J. Woodhouse (Oxford, 1930).

Rhiannon in MPR gives Pwyll the bag on the very occasion of her frustrated wedding with him, telling him to bring it with him in a year's time and to bring a hundred men. But Pwyll's provision of a hundred men to overcome Gwawl *has already been described* when he went to Dyved to the first—his own—wedding-feast; that is to say, the author, in combining the two forms of the stories forgot to transfer this detail which in the present version has no meaning because it belongs to the *second* wedding-feast. Then there is the curious remark of Rhiannon when she says that the *darmerth*, 'the spread' (to use a colloquialism) has already been given to the retainers. But this was a part of Gwawl's request which Pwyll had promised to grant; in other words, there must be some reason in an earlier version for this entirely otiose reference to the *darmerth*. This detail is due to contamination from the other well-known form of the *Disguised Beggar* theme where the beggar proposes a game with the bridegroom, with the bride *and the feast* as pledges to be claimed by the winner.

On account of these incoherences and repetitions, I am forced to the conclusion that we have here in MPR an instance of the many duplications to be found not only in the Mabinogion but in all the world's literature based on legendary material orally transmitted. If this supposition is right, then it is necessary to explain why the two types of the *Disguised Beggar* theme came to be combined in MPR. It was because both the marriage of Pwyll and Rhiannon and her 'kidnapping' by the Other-world were equally part of the original tradition, but they had entered it at widely different stages in time and development. The marriage of Pwyll and Rhiannon is a 'fairy' story in the strictest sense, one of an immense series of similar legends current in Wales,¹ a story which assumed its full maturity when Annwn was no longer, like the Greek Hades, the abode, in the strictly mythological sense, of the divinities of darkness; when, in other words, its denizens had become

¹ A full account of all these legends will be found in Sir John Rhŷs's *Celtic Folklore*.

fées or fairies. The *Rape of Rhiannon* on the other hand is a secondary development of the immemorial myth which was the Brythonic cognate of the legend of Demeter and Persephone, to be considered in fuller detail when we come to deal with *Manawydan*. So that one part of the material which we are now considering is a folk-lore duplication of the mythological incident in *Manawydan*.

The original story, then, before the *myth* of Rhiannon had been joined to the fairy tale of the *Marriage of Pwyll and Rhiannon* contained only one wedding, that of Gwawl and Rhiannon, to which Rhiannon was being forced by her father. It is from this that Pwyll rescues her by a trick in which he had been coached by Rhiannon when she *first* met him. In its simplest form, the story was as follows :

Pwyll met Rhiannon as described in MPR. Rhiannon declared her love but said that in a year's time she was to be given by her father in marriage to a man of her country, Gwawl vab Clud, *gwr tormynawg kyvoethawg*, 'a powerful man and a great warrior'. So, at this first meeting, she gave Pwyll a bag, instructing him to come to the wedding-feast at the court of her father Heveydd. He was to be disguised as a beggar, and to have a hundred retainers concealed in the orchard. In a year's time, he came as instructed and demanded as his boon, not the bride, but as much of the *darmerth* as would fill the little bag. 'That is a reasonable request', said Gwawl, and ordered his retainers to fill the bag, but the more they put in the further it was from being full. 'Will your bag ever be full?' said Gwawl. 'No', said Pwyll, 'unless a lord owning land and chattels stamp it down with his feet'. Gwawl therefore went into the bag, and Pwyll turned it over his head and knotted it.

He then summoned his men from the orchard and each one as he came to the bag asked 'What is there here?' 'A badger', said Pwyll, and then the retainers gave the bag a mighty blow : that was the origin of the game 'Badger in the Bag'. Gwawl asked for mercy and Rhiannon said 'We won't bother about the

darmerth since that, in any case, belongs to my father, but Gwawl must give securities not to seek vengeance for this'. Gwawl consented, but Heveydd, who had chosen Gwawl to be Rhiannon's husband, said to Pwyll: 'Now you have captured Rhiannon, you will come back in a year's time to have a proper wedding'. 'Not at all,' says Pwyll. 'She will go with me now to Dyved'. So Pwyll and Rhiannon went back to Dyved and they were welcomed there with great rejoicing.

One point remains to be considered, the *Badger in the Bag* incident. Dr. Davies in his Dictionary (1632) states that it was a well-known game in Wales, and Dafydd ap Gwilym in his poetic dispute with Gruffudd Gryg at the beginning of the fifteenth century, threatens his opponent that he will become *broch yng nghod* 'badger in the bag' if ever he visits Dafydd's country, which has already been referred to as *Pryderi dir*, 'the land of Pryderi'. A similar game is played to this day in Mexico where a dummy filled with cigarettes, pieces of sugar-cane, and sweetmeats is placed in a bag and those present then strike it till *the eatables fall out*¹; it can be assumed that in more primitive times the dummy was a living person. If the cognate Welsh game referred to by Dr. Davies involved the presence of eatables, we can easily see how the similarity of circumstances attracted this contamination to the Pwyll legend, and why the disposal of the *darmerth* is a distinct feature of the *Pwyll* account. The *darmerth*, the 'eatables', were actually distributed among the guests.

It would be too fanciful perhaps to suggest that this incident in *Pwyll* or in the *cyvarwyddyd* on which Pwyll is based had passed into some hitherto undiscovered Arthurian romance in French or German, but in a letter² Sir Philip Magnus says that in the reign of Maximilian (1564-76) two noblemen, a Spaniard and a German, sought the emperor's daughter Helen in marriage. To decide between them 'the emperor ordered a large sack to be brought, and

¹ *Illustrated London News*, Nov. 29, 1913.

² *Sunday Times*, Dec. 1, 1924.

declared that he who should first put his rival into the sack should wed the fair Helena. The strange combat was actually performed in the presence of the Imperial Court. The German succeeded in enveloping the Spaniard, and laid him at the Emperor's feet'. Was this idea of the Emperor's due to knowing a similar device in one of the Romances?

The Rape of Rhiannon's son and Rhiannon's Penance.

In the next portion of *Pwyll II*, we find, buried under a great accumulation of extraneous additions, the central incident in the *Myth of Rhiannon*, which in itself provides the key to the problem of the ultimate origins of this portion of *Pwyll* and of *Manawydan*, namely the Rape of Rhiannon's son and his restoration. The following is a bare summary which we may call RRSP.

RRSP.

After two years of marriage, Rhiannon was childless. So the men of the country told Pwyll that he was getting older and that they feared he would have no son 'by the wife you have'. They urged him to take another wife, because 'even if you wish to be as you are, we will not suffer it'. Pwyll obtains from them a year's respite; during that year—the third or the fourth—a son was born. The six women guarding the mother and child fell asleep and when they awoke at cock-crow, the child had disappeared. To protect themselves from punishment, they accused Rhiannon of having destroyed her son; to support the charge they killed the pups of a stag-hound bitch 'which was there', smeared Rhiannon's face and hands with their blood, and cast the bones before her. Then the men of the country urged Pwyll to divorce his wife 'for this unseemly slaughter'. Pwyll replied that the only reason they had given for divorcing his wife was that she had no children. 'I know that she has *children*, and I will not divorce her. If she has done wrong, let her make penance for it'. Her penance was to be at the court of Arberth for seven

years, to sit by a horse-block outside the court, to recount the reason for her disgrace to all who approached the court, and to offer to carry them *on her back to the court*, but it was rarely that anyone accepted her offer.

At that time Teyrnnon Twryv Vliant¹ was lord of Gwent-is-coed, and 'he was the noblest man in the world'. He had a mare, the fairest and best in the kingdom. Every May eve she foaled, but the foals used to disappear completely. So one May eve, he brought the mare into the house and watched. Early in the night, the mare foaled a great beautiful foal which stood up at once. Then Teyrnnon heard a great noise and a claw came through the window and snatched the foal. Teyrnnon with his sword struck off the claw at the elbow and so saved the foal. Then there was a commotion outside, and Teyrnnon rushed out and found in the doorway a baby in his swaddling clothes with a sheet of pali over him.

He consulted his wife who was childless and they decided to tell their neighbours *that this was their own child*. They baptized him 'with the baptism practised at that time'. They named him Gwri Wallt Eurin, 'Gwri of the Golden Hair'.

In a year's time Gwri was taller than a three-year old and in the second year taller than a six-year old child. He was particularly interested in horses. 'And before his fourth year he used to tip the grooms to allow him to lead the horses to the water'. They trained the rescued foal to give to Gwri as his own.

Teyrnnon then heard of the strange events that had taken place at Pwyll's court and of Rhiannon's penance. He looked hard at Gwri and saw that he resembled Pwyll. So he and his wife decided that the boy should be restored to his father. Teyrnnon went to Arberth and at the entrance to the court, Rhiannon offered to carry

¹ Hence *Nant Teyrnnon* the old Welsh name of Llantarnam in Monmouthshire. But the traditional Welsh name is also given by many popular writers as *Llantorvaen*. Is *Twryv Vliant* (=Twrvliant or Torvliant) a corrupt form of this?

him and his companions on her back. Teyrnnon refused and explained how he had found Gwri and 'there is not a man here', he said 'but will recognize him to be Pwyll's son'. 'It would be the deliverance of my grief (*pryder*) if that were true', said Rhiannon. 'Lady', said Pendaran Dyved [*who makes here his first appearance*] 'well have you named your son, *Pryderi*. The name which befits him best is *Pryderi*, son of Pwyll Pen Annwvn'. 'Consider', said *Rhiannon* 'whether his *own* name would befit him best'. 'What is the name', said Pendaran Dyved. 'We called him Gwri Wallt Eurin'. 'Pryderi', said Pendaran Dyved 'shall be his name'. 'That is most right', said Pwyll, 'to take the child's name from the word which his mother said when she had joyful news of him'. And so it was settled.

It will be noted that there is much confusion in the account of the change of name. Rhiannon insists that 'his own name would befit him best' *before* that name had been made known. The declaration 'we called him Gwri Gwallt Eurin' is inserted into the narrative without the usual statement who the speaker was. This uncertainty in the telling of the story was because the name Gwri belonged to the Rhiannon myth and the name Pryderi to the Pendaran legend.

The rest, the fosterage incident, has already been summarised on pp. 18-9.

As in the totality of *Math* and *Branwen*, myths, legends, folk-tales, and links by the author have been heaped together in RRSP into so compact a mass that it is difficult to decide which of its various elements should first be pulled out from the jumble in order to make a start. It is very much like the problem which faces the lumberman in a log-jam; he knows that amid the hopeless-looking accumulation which has held up his work there is one particular 'key' log, which, if released, will eventually cause the free flow of the rest. In this case, it is the *Penance of Rhiannon*

that seems most obviously the 'key log' because it is incongruous and out of place, and not necessarily because it is a basic incident but because its elucidation is most likely to throw light on the relationships of the other portions.

It is, of course, clear even to the superficial reader that Rhiannon's penance bears no logical relation to her crime. The crime with which Rhiannon is charged is 'destroying' her child—or perhaps eating him, since the women who 'frame her' manufacture the evidence by smearing her face and hands with the puppies' blood and casting the bones on the bed before her; but her penance is to act as a horse and to carry visitors to the court on her back as if she herself were a horse! The crime clearly belongs to one version of this type of tale, and the punishment to another; in short two versions of the *Mother Wrongly Accused* have been mixed, the former half of one being joined to the latter half of another. This is not surprising because among the scores, if not hundreds, of examples of this popular folk-tale, there is not one which does not exhibit some contamination from other and differing versions.

The *Calumniated Wife* or, under its other names of *Mother Wrongly Accused* and *Suffering Queen* (of which we have two versions in the Mabinogion, the other being in *Branwen*), has been already studied by storyologists¹ but, as far as I am aware, no one has perceived the true significance of the version in *Pwyll*. The best known example in English is the story of Constance in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*. In *Pwyll*, however, an unrelated story, the *Demon Hand*, which is itself complex, has been inserted to provide the machinery for the exchange of the foal and child. It will be observed that in the *Pwyll* version the actual *substitution* of the foal for the child has dropped out.

Kittredge gives the following as the basic plot of the *Demon Hand* (DH), which he has reconstructed from the large number of examples studied by him :

¹ See Margaret Schlauch, *Chaucer's Constance and Accused Queens* (New York, 1927) and the extensive bibliography of the subject in G. L. Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon* (Harvard University, 1903).

DH.

A certain king has already lost two children, who have been carried off as soon as they were born. [Apparently no one knows what has become of them for all the watchers are overcome with sleep]. The Queen is expecting a third child. A hero of extraordinary strength visits the King [perhaps by invitation], and undertakes to watch. The child is born. The hero resists the soporific magic to which all others yield, grasps the gigantic hand that descends through the smoke-hole (or window) to seize the child, and tears it off at the shoulder. The monster escapes, leaving behind the child and the arm.¹

It was not, however, this basic version which contaminated the story of the *Loss of the Child* in *Pwyll*, but a complex version, of which there is an abundance of examples in Ireland and Scotland as well as in many other countries. It was composed of two motifs (a) the *Demon Hand* (DH) as summarized above, and (b) *The Faithful Dog* (FD), which in its simplest form in Western legend² was as follows :

FD.

The master's child is attacked by a wolf, but a hound which is guarding the child kills the wolf. The master on returning fails to see the child but sees the hound covered with blood and believes that it has destroyed the child. He rashly kills the hound, but finds out his mistake when he discovers the child safe and the wolf killed.

The particular version of DH which has intruded itself into the *Pwyll* version of *The Calumniated Wife* had already, probably for a long time, been in contact with FD, but during the process of its development into RRSP had shed all the details of the FD complex except one—namely the otherwise inexplicable fact that a stag-hound was on guard

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 227.

² It is generally agreed that this *märchen* is of Oriental origin. *Op. cit.* p. 223.

in the chamber where the child slept. That one detail from FD came to be retained because it was necessary as the machinery of the charge against Rhiannon, just as the claw was retained from DH to provide the machinery for the removal of the child and the substitution of the foal.

We are gradually working our way towards the main clue, the Penance of Rhiannon, and it is now time to consider the major story, the *Calumniated Wife*, in which form RSSP is found. It is unnecessary to trace all the ramifications of this *märchen*, which in medieval times overshadowed all others in its influence, entering into a vast variety of unrelated forms including many of the Lives of the Saints. It has already been studied in some detail in the works which have been named.

The typical *Calumniated Wife* (CW) theme, with some of its variations, is as follows :

CW.

A king has married a woman from another country, sometimes definitely from the Other-world. The King's mother, or in many cases, the King's subjects, are jealous of her and try to induce the King for various reasons—one being that she is apparently barren—to divorce her. He refuses, and the queen's enemies plot her downfall. There are three types of false accusations in the various versions :

(1). That the Queen has no children because she destroys or devours them at birth. In order to support their charge, they steal the child at birth and smear the mother with blood. (CWK).

(2). That the Queen herself is a Demon or Fairy, that the father is a Demon visitant, and that the child is a Fairy or Demon child and should be destroyed. (CWF).

(3). That the queen has given monstrous birth to an animal. To support this charge, they steal the child and place an animal in the bed with the queen. (CWM).

The king then turns against his wife. He banishes her from the royal bedchamber, compels her to do menial tasks, and orders her to perform a penance appropriate to the crime, as follows :

(1). If the accusation is that of destroying the child, she is condemned to be struck every day by the butcher with a knife. (CWK).

(2). If the charge is of having consorted with a demon, no definite penance is recorded since it would be difficult to devise anything appropriate, but there can be a test—the child is held in the fire, if he does *not* burn, then he is a son of the demon. It is possible that the queen also is thrust into the fire. (CWF).

(3). The penance for having given birth to an animal is to be compelled to do the tasks which that particular animal usually does or to behave as such an animal naturally behaves. (CWM).

Before we consider the particular version of CW found in *Pwyll*, it will be necessary, for the sake of comparison, to glance at another version of the same theme found in *Branwen*.

CWB.

Branwen, queen of Ireland, is a foreigner. The king's subjects therefore hated her, and after the birth of her son, Gwern, they persuaded the king to banish her into the kitchen. No charge was formulated against Branwen personally, but the excuse was that Branwen's half-brother, Evnysien, had insulted the king, Matholwch. Her punishment was to make bread in the kitchen and to be struck a blow every day by the butcher after he had been cutting meat. She was thus three years in disgrace, but during that time she had taught a starling to speak. She sent the bird to Wales with a letter for her brother Bendigeidfran, who led an expedition to Ireland to avenge his sister. He came to terms with the Irish but in the peace conference, the

mischief-making brother, Evnysien, seized the child Gwern and thrust him head-first into the fire. Branwen then saw that *the child was burning* and there was a general fight when Morddwyd Tyllion said '*Gwern gwngwch uiwch Vorddwyd Tyllion*'.

It will be profitable to spend some little time over this version, CWB, especially as the third Branch, *Branwen*, is not included in the scheme of these lectures.¹ The student of the Mabinogion will have noticed that the outstanding characteristic of *Branwen* is the excessively large number of 'loose ends' in the narrative and a vast amount of incoherence and confusion. In other words, the author or the cyvarwydd is dealing with material which has undergone little of the 'ironing-out' process, as compared with the equally complex material of *Math*, for instance. CWB is no exception to the rest of *Branwen*; it contains the beginning of more than one story, the middle of some, and the end of others, and little attempt is made to join them into one whole, which fortunately makes the task of disentanglement comparatively easy. The Crime and Accusation are omitted altogether, since Branwen is punished for something which an irresponsible mischief-maker has committed. No explanation is given of Evnysien's mad action in thrusting the child into the fire, and of the words of Morddwyd Tyllion which, as they stand in the text, seem at first sight to be totally inexplicable. It is even not known whether the second and third words are Welsh or Irish.

It is not difficult to trace the origin of the incident of the starling; it comes from one well-authenticated type of the CW story, as listed in No. 707, Aarne-Thompson.² Here it is utilised as a handy device to defeat the blockade which the men of Ireland proclaimed to prevent all communication with Branwen's native country. It is not an essential feature of CW, but its presence in CWB helps us to realise from what a vast variety of sources the Mabinogion stories are derived.

¹ It is hoped to publish later a detailed study of *Branwen*.

² *The Types of the Folk-tale* (Helsinki, 1928).

The key to the complexity of CWB is exactly the same key as must be applied to RRSP—the *fact that the penance is not appropriate to the crime*. Logically, Branwen should have been charged with butchering her child, and then the penance of being struck daily by the butcher would be intelligible. But even then, the latter part of CWB adds a new complexity, because Evnysien thrust the child into the fire to prove that he could be burnt and could not therefore be a demon child. I suggest then that the development of CWB was from a primitive basis which was somewhat as follows :

Branwen was hated because she was a foreigner, and therefore she was charged with being a fairy and consorting with demons. Now iron was taboo to a fairy and the basic condition on which a fairy consents to remain in a man's society was that she should never be touched with iron. So she is struck daily with an iron knife—the *cyvarwydd* using here for his own purpose a form of penance which was well-known in CW stories where the queen, as in RRSP, is accused of destroying her child. When the hosts of Wales come to Ireland to deliver her, Branwen herself (or one of her friends) proves that the child Gwern is an ordinary mortal by showing that, if thrust into the fire, he burns and does not disappear up the chimney as a demon-child would. And that is why he got his name of *Gwern Vorddwyd Tyllion* 'Gwern with-holes-in-his-thighs', the holes being the result of the burns. [Later *cyvarwyddon* having no better understanding than we have of the jumble of words in the naming incident as quoted in the text made *Morddwyd Tyllion* into a separate person, as in *Kulhwch*, and the last *cyvarwydd* or the author made such a person pronounce the jumble of words in the text].

To return to the *Calumniated Wife* portion of RRSP, which we shall call CWP, the punishment of Rhiannon was originally of course the logical penance for her crime. We have seen that in one form of CWM, the queen was charged

with having given birth to an animal. This theme persisted to appeal to a perverted sexual interest in the people of Europe up to our time, as anyone who has glanced at that popular mixture of eroticism and sober gynaecology called the 'Works of Aristotle', will know. It is all the stranger, therefore, that this extremely popular motif should have been omitted from CWP, while the penance appropriate to it was retained. Not only is the accusation omitted (as it is omitted in CWB) but another accusation was substituted for it from a variant version, CWK.

We may take CWP back yet another stage. The men of Dyved complain against Rhiannon that she has no son to succeed Pwyll, and Pwyll then says something which in the context of CWP is entirely incomprehensible,—*plant a wnn y vot idi hi*, which involves a grammatical confusion between *plant* (plural) and *y vot* (singular). Sir Ifor Williams comments on *y vot* thus: 'Not *eu bot* [plural]. Perhaps this favours Rhys's idea that *plant* may sometimes be singular'.¹ But the grammatical point here is that the presence of *y* in this idiom is in any case, whether singular or plural, syntactically incorrect; the correct form would be *plant a wnn i vot idi hi*, so that the singular can have been no part of the older text.²

The explanation of the fact that Pwyll says that Rhiannon has *children* and not *a child* is to be found in the latter part of RRSP—'Every May eve the mare foaled, but the *foals* used to disappear completely'; that is to say, every child newly born to Rhiannon would be snatched away, and a foal would be substituted, the mystery being unsolved till Teyrnion intervened. The charge against Rhiannon, as Pwyll insists, is that she has no children; because the Monster Birth accusation could only be made after the foal exchange had become known. It will be noticed that even the author did not know that in the original and more logical version, Rhiannon was appropriately punished for giving birth to a foal.

¹ PKM, 145.

² Which read *plant a wnn y vot idi hi* where the *y*, as often in older Welsh, is the 1st pers. of the affixed pronoun, and therefore belongs to the subject of *a wnn*.

The story of *Rhiannon as the Calumniated Wife* of which CWP is a confused version, and which we may call RCW, would in its main features be as follows in one of its earlier intermediate stages, that is half-way between the primitive *Myth of Rhiannon* and CWP.

RCW.

Rhiannon was from Annwvn and she had married Pwyll, but Pwyll's subjects, the men of Dyved, hated her because of her foreign origin [as in nearly all forms of CW.] After a year she gave birth to a son who was immediately snatched away, and a foal placed in his stead. Rhiannon could not conceal the loss of her child, but she kept the foal from the knowledge of her husband and his subjects. This happened a second and a third time, so her enemies demanded that Pwyll should divorce her because she had no children. He obtained from them a year's respite and when the time came for her to be delivered of another child he set watchers to guard Rhiannon's bed. A magic sleep fell on the watchers and they awoke to find the child gone and a foal in Rhiannon's bed. [Her enemies had taken the child and had cast him adrift in a boat, as usually in CW stories, or sent him to another part of the country where he was rescued by Pendaran Dyved and his men, who brought him up.] So this time her enemies charge her with being the mother of a foal, as in CWM, and again demand that Pwyll divorce her. 'I agreed to divorce her only if she had no children' said Pwyll, 'but I know that she has had children whatever happened to them. Let her however make penance for giving birth to a foal'. They decided that the appropriate penance was that she should act like a mare and carry on her back all-comers to the court. So it was done, but Pendaran Dyved 'who had once been a man of Pwyll's'¹ noticed as the child grew up how like in

¹ This in *Pwyll* is said of Teyrnnon, but we shall see later that the roles of Teyrnnon and Pendaran have been mixed.

appearance he was to Pwyll, and took him to Pwyll's court. There was great rejoicing because Rhiannon had been vindicated and the child restored. [The men of Pendaran's country were given a special privilege² in Dyved, because they had been foster-fathers to the child.]

It was probably at this stage of development that the unrelated DH and FD (*see* p. 59), the story of the Demon Claw, intruded itself into the comparatively simple RCW, because the motif of DH supplied the machinery for the substitution of the foal for the child. Another factor however in this contamination, as in all other instances, must not be forgotten. As I insisted at the beginning of these lectures, the author was an artist and not a mere compiler ; like Homer he had his full share of the dramatic sense and was abundantly endowed with the power of giving it expression. The whole episode of the Demon Claw is so admirably related that I have little hesitation in assigning this addition in its final form to the author rather than to one of his innumerable predecessors among the cyvarwyddon. Anyway, the inclusion in the narrative of DH with its trace of FD was recent in the development of *Pwyll* since it has not undergone any subsequent change after it was first incorporated in the story of Rhiannon and her child.

We have discussed the development of CWR, the *Calumniated Wife* theme, as we find it attached to Rhiannon. Now the crucial question arises—why *did* it become attached to Rhiannon? What feature was there in the Rhiannon myth or legend which attracted (1) the accusation of having given birth to a foal ; and (2) the penance of acting as a mare? Beside these two points another feature of *Pwyll* found in MPR must be questioned—why was Rhiannon on horse-back when she came to meet Pwyll? It should be noted that all three features are exceptional in these two types of stories—CWM and *The Lady from Fairyland*. As far as I have been able to find, after a long study of the examples,

² For this ' privilege ' *see* pp. 16 ff.

the horse does not figure in either type except in those instances where it can be demonstrated that they were influenced by RCW or MPR themselves or their sources.

The answer to the three questions is that Rhiannon is no mere figure of Fairy folk-lore, but the survival of an immemorial myth in which she was the Great Mother who became identified with the Great Horse Goddess, Epona.¹

¹ It should be recorded that the late Sir Edward Anwyl in his lectures on the Mabinogion at this college (Aberystwyth) and in some of his writings had already seen the probability of this identification.

IV

MANAWYDAN

THE study of the Myth of Rhiannon leads us naturally to the third Branch of the Mabinogi which is generally called *Manawydan*, though no title is attached to it in WB, but it is possible that the title given at the end to part of the mabinogi, *Mabinogi Mynweir a Mynord*, was meant to be applicable to the whole of the Branch in its original form. *Manawydan* contains a version of the *Rape of Pryderi*, of which the account in *Pwyll* is a highly complicated variant. The mabinogi as a whole falls into nine main sections, as follows :

(1). Introduction, designed to show how Manawydan became the husband of Rhiannon and step-father of Pryderi, and why, in spite of all tradition to the contrary, he is in this mabinogi Lord of Dyved.

(2). A disjointed relic of an older version. Pryderi intended to go to Kent and actually went to Oxford to pay homage to Caswallon, son of Beli.

(3). While Pryderi and his wife Cigva, Manawydan, and Rhiannon sat on the Gorsedd of Arberth, a sheet of mist descended on the land. When it cleared, all the houses, men, flocks, and crops had disappeared. They lived on hunting and fish and wild honey.

(4). After two years they went to England, and came to Hereford. In order to make a living, Manawydan took to making saddles. The saddlers plotted to slay him and his companion. Pryderi wanted to kill them but Manawydan refused and they moved to another town where they made shields. The shield-makers plotted to kill them. Pryderi wanted to kill the shield-makers but Manawydan refused, and they went to another town. Manawydan taught Pryderi to make shoes and again

the shoemakers rose against them and sought to slay them. Again Manawydan refused to retaliate and they returned to Dyved, and for a year they lived by hunting.

(5). One day they hunted a pure-white boar and followed him into a large castle (*caer*) which they knew had not been there before. The hounds followed the boar into the castle, and they went 'to the top of the gorsedd' but could hear no sound from the hounds. Against Manawydan's advice, Pryderi went into the caer after the hounds and saw a marble fountain in the middle of the court with a golden goblet hanging on chains. He grasped the goblet, and immediately his hands stuck to it and his feet to the ground, and he lost his speech. When Manawydan returned, Rhiannon upbraided him for having lost his companion and went into the caer and saw Pryderi stuck to the goblet. She put her hands on the goblet and she also suffered the same fate as Pryderi. Night came and a sheet of mist and the caer disappeared and Pryderi and Rhiannon with it.

(6). Cigva when she saw that she was left alone with Manawydan made lament. 'I swear', said he, 'that you have nothing to fear from me; even were I at the beginning of my youth I would keep faith with Pryderi'. They went to Lloegr (England) and Manawydan said that, to make a living, he would become a shoemaker as before, in spite of Cigva's protest that the craft was not 'clean' enough for a man of his dignity. Again the shoemakers plotted to kill him. 'Why do you suffer it from the churls?' said Cigva. 'No', said he, 'we would even then go to Dyved'. [Manawydan's answer is not related to Cigva's question. A sentence of Cigva's has been lost such as 'Pes lladut, ni a gaffem y wlat yn ryd i ni an hunein.' 'If you were to kill them, we would have the country free for ourselves.']

(7). Manawydan carried a load of wheat to Dyved. He sowed three crofts which grew excellently. When he

went to reap two of the crofts he found that all the ears of wheat had been cut off from the stalk. He watched the third croft and at midnight he saw a vast horde of mice which began to carry off the ears. He failed to reach a single one of the mice when he struck among them, but he chased one mouse which seemed heavy of gait and caught it. He placed it in his glove and told Cigva that he was going to hang it. Cigva protested that it was beneath his dignity to handle vermin but Manawydan persisted. He went to the Gorsedd of Arberth and prepared to hang the mouse. He was surprised to see a scholar approach him, who said he had been 'singing in England', and offered Manawydan a pound if he would release the mouse. Manawydan refused. After the scholar came a priest who offered three pounds for the life of the mouse, and finally a bishop with his retinue, who offered seven pounds, and then twenty-four pounds, and then all the horses in the retinue. Manawydan still refused. 'Name your price then', said the bishop. Manawydan then demanded the release of Rhiannon and Pryderi and the ending of the enchantment on Dyved. The bishop consented and explained that he was Llwyd vab Cilcoed, that he had placed the enchantment on Dyved out of friendship with Gwawl vab Clut, in revenge for the game of *Broch yng nghod* [as described in *Pwyll*]¹. He had by magic changed his household into mice to destroy the two crofts and had done the same to the women of his court for the third croft. But his wife was pregnant, and that was the mouse which Manawydan had caught.

Manawydan bound him not only to release the prisoners but to promise that he would seek no revenge and that there should be no more enchantment on Dyved. Pryderi and Rhiannon were restored, and Llwyd vab Cilcoed struck the mouse with his magic wand and restored her to her form.

¹ See pp. 49, 54-5.

(8). When Manawydan looked around him, he saw that all the houses and flocks and crops in Dyved had been restored.

(9). “What manner of slavery had Pryderi and Rhiannon”, said he. “Pryderi had the hammers (*yrd*) of the gate of my court round his neck, and Rhiannon had the collars (*mynweireu*) of the she-asses after they had been harvesting hay (*gweir*) round her neck. And that was their prison.” And because of that prison, that cyvarwyddyd was named *Mabinogi Mynweir a Mynord*. And so ends this branch of the Mabinogi’.

Of these nine sections the primitive theme is contained in five, namely 1, 3, 5, 8 and 9. It will be convenient to consider first the other sections, 2, 4, 6 and 7.

Section 7, *The Mice in the Corn*, is almost unique among the different constituents of the Mabinogion. From beginning to end it forms one perfectly consistent and coherent whole ; it has no complexities and no discernible trace of admixture and contamination. It is complete in itself and apart from the necessary connecting link—the statement that the pillage was in revenge for the game of *Broch yng nghod*—it requires no knowledge of any other incident in the *Four Branches* for its perfect understanding. It is ‘modern’, in the sense that a writer of quite exceptional literary gifts has taken in hand a folk-tale of witchcraft, dressed it in contemporary garments, and made of it a ‘short story’, exactly as Le Braz, for instance, has done in his tales of Brittany, or, more exactly perhaps, Anatole France in *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*. It is for this reason that we get such touches as the scholar who has been begging in England and the bishop travelling with his retinue—they are part of the modern garments with which the old tale has been newly clothed. The ‘surprise’ of the dénouement—‘that mouse was my wife and she was pregnant’—is perfectly timed, and in this respect, the only other portion of the WB material with which it can be compared is the story of the *Lame Ant* in *Kulhwch*, with its exquisite ending. The *Mice in the Corn* could be lifted bodily

out of *Manawydan* and presented as an independent short story ; which means that in the stage immediately preceding the putting together of *Manawydan*, it had probably been already composed as an independent *literary* tale and was now utilised as the machinery for detecting the cause and cure of the traditional *Hud ar Ddyved*—the Enchantment on Dyved.

The primitive tale which formed the basis of *The Mice in the Corn* is difficult to find. As far as I know there are few analogies in Celtic countries, and those are crude and uninteresting when compared with the Welsh version. In one example, the field of wheat is destroyed by fairy cattle and their fairy owner is overcome when the watcher has eaten bread baked to the fairies' formula.¹ In another, the raiding animals are horses. 'The men pursued them, but only succeeded in capturing one, and he was the noblest of the lot'.² *The Mice in the Corn* was not part of the *Eustace* type of legend in which the major portion of *Manawydan* is framed ; it is equally certain that it is, strictly speaking, a 'folk-tale' and was never part of the primitive myth of the *Waste Land*. Its complete coherence and integrity of form preclude the supposition that it was an original feature of the *Enchantment on Dyved* where, in common with the rest of the Mabinogion, it would have undergone the disintegration and reconstruction which result from long oral transmission.

Sections 2, 4 and 6 together form a composite whole consisting of two distinct elements : (a) a vital nucleus of a primitive legend of the malevolent wizard Caswallon, surviving into the time when the mabinogi was composed, and (b) a framework based on a theme which, with the *Calumniated Wife*, produced a vast number of popular romances in the later Middle Ages, especially in England.

The framework theme is generally known as the *Eustace*

¹ Curtin, *Hero-Tales of Ireland*, pp. 36, ff. This confused tale contains the insistence on 'bread baked neither hard nor soft' as in the *Legend of Llyn y Van vach*.

² Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, p. 108.

*Legend*¹. It has many analogies in Oriental stories, but the first European version is contained in the *Life of St. Eustathius*,² which was popular in the tenth century. Placidus, who in baptism was renamed Eustathius, having lost all his property and afterwards his wife and children lived as a common labourer for fifteen years. Theospita his wife supported herself elsewhere. Through the intervention of the Emperor Trajan he was restored to his wife and children. Later they both suffered martyrdom because they refused to sacrifice to Apollo. This legend of a saint may have inspired the French and English analogues, but it is quite as likely that the *Life of St. Eustathius* was founded on the theme of *The Man tried by Fate* which was already popular just as the *Pope Gregory* legend was founded on the theme of the *Calumniated Wife*. The French, English, and Spanish romances—and *Manawydan*—are therefore cognate to this saint's life and not necessarily derived from it.

The chief examples of the *Eustace* type of legend are *Guillaume d'Engleterre* (GE) reputed to be the work of Chrétien de Troyes and belonging to the second half of the twelfth century; the Spanish *El Cavellero Cifar* (C) of the early fourteenth century, and the English *Sir Ysumbras* (SY), written before the middle of the fourteenth century. In detail these romances differ widely but the basic theme may be stated as follows:

A rich man loses all his property, or (GE) gives away all his property, and with his family leaves his home for a foreign land. In GE the sons leave home because they dislike the trade of their foster-fathers. While they are wandering in the foreign country and living by begging, he loses his wife and sons by accident or by violence. He then seeks them (C) and while he is doing so, he observes complete chastity (C) and works at manual labour (smith in SY). At last he finds his wife and sons (by the help of a bishop in the 13th century

¹ For a preliminary survey see G. H. Gerould, PMLA, xix, pp. 335 ff. Unfortunately this valuable contribution deals mainly with Oriental and Continental analogues and has little to say about the development of the theme as an English speciality of the fourteenth century.

² *Acta Sanctorum*, Sept. VI, die 20, pp. 123 ff.

Die gute Frau) and all his property is restored. In all the examples, the Christian virtues of the hero are stressed; Eustace was specially famous for his *tolerantia*.¹

It is not difficult to see how the legend of the Welsh hero who lost all his property through the machinations of Annwvn, then lost his son and wife; who wandered in a waste land looking for them, and who finally through his own cunning regained all he had lost, how this was inevitably attracted to similar accounts of the *Man tried by Fate* which were popular in England when the final recensions of the *Four Branches* were made. The close relation between *Manawydan* and some form of the English story, probably no longer extant, is clearly indicated in the WB. text. Here the main action takes place in *England*, in Hereford, and *not* in Dyved, which marks this portion of *Manawydan* as essentially different from the rest of the *Four Branches* where neither England nor any place in it is mentioned, except twice in *Branwen*. The scholars who try to redeem the condemned mouse have been begging in England, and in Section 2 Pryderi intends to go to Kent and actually goes to Oxford to pay homage to Caswallon. It is most important to note that though *Caint*, the Welsh name of Kent, was perfectly well-known to all Welsh writers of the period, it is the English name *Kent* which is used here. This suggests that the Welsh form of the Eustace legend which influenced *Manawydan* was a popular non-literary tale from England which, as is the manner of such popular tales, took over without change the nomenclature of the original. It is only by reference to the *Eustace* legend that we can account for the obvious duplication in Sections 4 and 6, since exactly the same events are found in both sections. It is probable that the *Myth of Rhiannon*, as we shall see, told how Rhiannon's son was lost and how Rhiannon and her husband (by whatever name he was known) sought him over all the desolate

¹ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Minora* (R.S.ed. V. 466) 'patientiam Job, tolerantiam Eustachii'. Here 'patience' is distinguished from *tolerantia* 'forbearance'.

land. But the *Eustace* legend was necessarily in two parts, the wanderings and sufferings of the husband with his wife, and the wanderings and sufferings of the wife and husband separately. This imposed on the *Manawydan* version a duplication which the author for all his artistry failed to conceal—the tribulations of Manawydan, Rhiannon, Pryderi and Cigva in the first part, and the tribulations of Manawydan and Cigva after losing the others in the second part.

Section 2 seems to be based on a different Welsh version of the *Waste Land*. The reason for the inclusion of this doublet in *Manawydan* is at first sight obscure, since, as it stands, it has no bearing on the rest of the mabinogi. It provides however an additional example of one of the most striking features of the narrative in the *Mabinogion*, namely the inclusion of more than two versions of the same story, one of which is so manipulated as to become subordinate to the other. Caswallon son of Beli is, of course, a main character in Geoffrey's *Brut*, and what is said of him here in *Manawydan* agrees with the tradition there recorded. In *Branwen* however we get a different Caswallon; there he is definitely a *gormes*, a tyrannous persecutor. When the seven warriors who formed the *gorvot*, 'the survival', of the army which had invaded Ireland were on their way to Harlech, they met a company of men and women:

"Have you tidings," said Manawydan. "None" said they, "but that Caswallon son of Beli has captured the Island of Giants and that he is a crowned king in London." "What", said they [i.e. the seven warriors] "befell Cradawc son of Bran and the seven men left with him in this Island?" "Caswallon attacked them and killed the six men, and as to Cradawc, he broke his heart from grief, for he saw the sword killing his men and he knew not who was killing them. Caswallon had clad himself in a Cloak of Enchantment, and no one saw him slaying the men but only the sword. Caswallon did not wish to kill him [Cradawc] too—he was his nephew, his cousin's son . . ." said they'.

Here Caswallon is one of the company of evil magic-workers who figure so largely in the *Four Branches*, and it seems that in the basic tales from which both *Manawydan* and *Branwen* were constructed, Caswallon was represented as the Other-world enemy of the protagonists. For some reason, not easily discernible, the evil-working magician of tradition has been given the name of a historical character, Cassivellaunus, whom Geoffrey of Monmouth had made famous and who was associated with Eastern England.¹ *Manawydan* and *Pryderi* in *Branwen* hear that he has, at one stroke and by magic, wiped out the governors of Britain, and it seems that Section 2 where *Pryderi* goes to England to pay homage to Caswallon is the débris of another version of the *Waste Land*, not this time in Dyved but in England, in which Caswallon played the part assigned in *Manawydan* to *Llwyd vab Cilcoed*.² If this surmise is correct, these portions of *Manawydan*, like much of the *Four Branches*, owe their present form to an attempt by cyvarwydd or author to reconcile different versions of the same event. In that case, as I have already said, Section 2 is, in a truncated form, an anticipatory doublet of Section 3, 5 and 6, where the account of the Desolation of Dyved as a particular instance of the theme is clothed in all or nearly all of the mythical as well as folk-lore traditions of the *Waste Land*.

The remaining portions of *Manawydan*, which we shall now consider, together form the essential nucleus of the mabinogi, or, to vary the metaphor, they form the original building to which the other sections have from time to time been added, these additions necessarily entailing much modification of the older building. The basic nucleus, without the various accumulations which have been so cleverly constructed into one artistic whole by the author, can be stated in short summary as follows :

¹ See Collingwood and Myers, *Roman Britain*, pp. 46 ff.

² *Llwyd vab Cilcoed* seems to be, as suggested by Rhys (CF. 546), an adaptation of the name of the Irish magician *Liath mac Celtchair*. *Llwyd* of course is the exact cognate of *Liath* and *Cilcoed* is in the parish of Eglwys *Lwyd* in Pembrokeshire. See also Anwyl, KZ iii, 126.

Rhiannon's son is snatched away from her by the powers of Annwvn. At the same time a terrible desolation falls upon the land ; all life and all growth disappear. Rhiannon and her husband spend a long time seeking their son. When they at last deliver him from captivity, prosperity is restored to the land and all life and growth re-appear.

It will be noticed that in the summary I have discarded that portion of *Manawydan* which describes Rhiannon as having been captured as well as her son and that Rhiannon's husband is, for the time, nameless. It has been seen that the disappearance of the wife was a necessary element of the *Eustace* theme, since the hero had to be represented as having lost everything—land, possession, children, and finally his wife. Further, the *Eustace* story, as for example, in *Sir Ysumbras*, was in two parts, in one of which the husband and wife begin their wanderings together and in the other the husband wanders alone. At what point in its development *Manawydan* was put into the framework of *Eustace* it is difficult to decide, but it was early enough for *Manawydan* in its later stages to have absorbed into itself the disappearance of Rhiannon. That was done by utilising a well-known folk-tale in which a person is captured because he has become stuck to the object or person he seeks, or when a series of persons have become stuck to the first.¹ We shall discuss the name of Rhiannon's husband later.

What of Cigva ? (Sections 3, 6, and 7). Though her name can be exactly matched with Irish *Ciochba* and with an Irish name in Wales in LL, ' Nant *Cichmann* ', she is unknown to Welsh tradition, and is only mentioned in Irish legend as the wife of one of the sons of Partholon. How then does she come to play an important part in *Manawydan* ? She is a figure of convenience introduced into the narrative because she was necessary to the story as conditioned by the *Eustace* contamination and in particular to support the character which the author had devised for *Manawydan*.

¹ E.g. Campbell, TWH, ii, pp. 183, 279 ; Wirt Sikes, BG, p. 136 ; Joyce, OCR, p. 238.

He is depicted as the ideal Christian gentleman—patient, tolerant, pacific, and above all, chaste. As in other cases of this kind, it is difficult to decide how much of this character is due to the author and how much to the *Eustace* tradition within which he worked. In trying to decide the point we must keep in mind these facts—first, all the *Eustace* stories are *exempla*, that is to say, they are contrived to convey a distinct moral lesson, and secondly, in the mabinogi the character of Manawydan has been developed far beyond the ‘goodness’ in the *exempla*. Here in *Manawydan* he is not only subjected to hardships and tribulations such as might befall any man, good or bad, but he is active and positive in his virtues. While the secular ideal of a gentleman in medieval times would certainly include a feeling of superiority over shoemakers and saddlers and willingness to slay them if they dared interfere with a gentleman’s actions and pleasures, Manawydan is not only humble enough to regard a manual trade as not degrading but so forbearing that he gives up his plans for his livelihood rather than oppose his enemies. And when he is left alone with Cigva and has access to no other woman, his chastity contrasts strangely with the tolerance towards male promiscuity shown by nearly all the romances of the period. Indeed, this is not the only occasion on which the author of the mabinogion has thought fit to chronicle a shining example of this unromantic virtue. In *Pwyll*, where the necessities of the plot make no such demands, he has gone out of his way to record even a more striking instance. Pwyll has been promised by Arawn ‘the fairest woman in the world to sleep with every night’ with no restrictions whatsoever; yet, though the queen believes him to be her husband, he refrains from any sexual activity. Apart from those tales where chastity is used as a test—as it is not in *Pwyll*—or where, as in the later versions of the Grail cycle, it is a condition, not of general virtue, but of fitness to handle the sacred vessel—there is nowhere in all the vast collection of romance anything like this insistence on chastity as a moral virtue. I venture to suggest in passing that all this gives strong support to anyone who would maintain that the final author of the Mabinogion

was an ecclesiastic of some kind, most probably a monk. I say 'final author' because the smoothness and directness of the style in the portions which contain these two incidents and especially the logical and coherent flow of the narrative prove that they have not been subject to the usual vicissitudes of oral transmission.

Cigva then is, as I have said, a figure of convenience in this dramatic narrative. She fulfils two purposes—to give expression to the conventional *grand seigneur* attitude towards peasants and craftsmen which the gentle Manawydan rejects, and in particular to give him an opportunity of proving his chastity. That she is an intruder is shown by the fact that the author or a glossator has to go out of his way to explain her inclusion in the plot when he interjects a sentence about her into quite unrelated matter :

“I will give her [Rhiannon] to you [says Pryderi to Manawydan], “and with her the possession of the seven cantrevs. And though you have no possession save those seven cantrevs, there are no seven cantrevs better. *Cigva, the daughter of Gwyn Gloyw* [Gwyn of Gloucester ?] *is my wife*” said he. “And though the possession be nominally mine, let the use of it be yours.”’

It is obvious that the sentence in italics is an interpolation which makes a complete break in the logical sequence of what Pryderi said. It was probably added by one of the later manipulators of the authors' work because he felt that Cigva's participation in the great adventure was insufficiently explained. In like manner, a sentence was added at the end of *Pwyll* naming Cigva as Pryderi's wife, where however Gwyn Gloyw, her father, appears as 'Gwyn Gohoyw son of Gloyw Walltlydan son of Cassnar Wledig',—a variation which suggests an uncertainty in the history assigned to her. In other words, she is a late-comer into the drama of *Manawydan*.

Perhaps the strangest feature of the *Mabinogi of Manawydan* is the character of Manawydan himself and the role assigned to him. Taking the older Celtic tradition as a whole, both

Irish and Welsh, we may safely assert that no character in this vast pantheon is so clearly defined as that of Manannán-Manawydan. In Irish legend he is always the magician and shape-shifter *par excellence*, the Other-world trickster who harries the heroes and heroines, the ruthless King of Faery who entices men and women to their destruction. 'Manawyddan (*sic*), a good character in Welsh, is matched in Irish by Manannán, represented as a very tricky druid or magician'.¹ He is paired with Gwyn ab Nudd, the Fairy king.² 'In Irish literature he figures mostly as the chief of fairies in the Land of Promise'.³

From the paucity of references to Manawydan in Welsh legends, and from the complete misrepresentation of his traditional character in what is practically the only account of him in Welsh, we may safely conclude that his *name* has been lifted from Irish merely as a name and applied to a character developed exclusively in Welsh story and literature, having no correspondence to his clearly defined personality in Irish. It is as if a Welsh dramatist who knew no English but was aware that Hamlet was conspicuous in literature as the Prince of Denmark were to write a play in which a prince, through strength of will and an unbending resolution successfully overcame all his difficulties, and were to give his hero the name Hamlet. On one essential point, however, this comparison is inadequate ; because it is possible, as we shall see, that the real Manawydan, that is the Manannán of Irish tradition, first entered the Rhiannon-Pryderi circle in his own character and became the Manawydan we know in this Mabinogi during its later development.

The name *Manawydan* corresponds, as we have said, to the Irish *Manannán*, but the phonetic nature of this correspondence is a matter of some doubt. Correspondence of Welsh to Irish mythical or legendary names is of at least four distinct types : (1) Where the Welsh name is cognate to the Irish, that is, derived from a common Celtic ancestor ;

¹ Rhys, CH.³, p. 377. Rhys connects his name with the Aryan root *men* found in Latin *mens*, *moneo*.

² *Ibid*, p. 174.

³ *Ibid*, p. 665.

for example, W. *Lleu* and I. *Lugh* from a recorded *Lugus*¹; W. *Don*, *Donwy* and I. *Danu* (genitive *Danann*), from *Danubia*². (2) Where the Welsh name is borrowed from *spoken* Irish whether in Wales or Ireland, for example *Corroi m. Dayry*³. from the Irish *Conrói maic Dáiri*, genitive of *Cúroí mac Dáiri*, where both *rr* from *nr* and *ay* from *ai* are normal linguistic developments of spoken sounds, and *Cnychwr mab Nes* from late Middle Irish *Conchobhur mac Nessa*.⁴ (3) Where the Welsh name is partly adapted from the Irish, e.g. *Llwyd vab Cilcoed* from *Líath mac Celtchair* noted above, and *Cubert m. Daere* from *Curoí mac Dáiri*.⁵ (4) Where the Welsh name is derived from an Irish *written* source and generally betrays its origin in a misreading and consequently a false transliteration by the copyist; for example, *Fercos m. Poch* from *Fergus mac Roich*, where the old form of *r* of the MS has been read as *p*.⁶

Manawydan belongs to the fourth class of correspondence. It is impossible that *Manawydan* as a genuine Welsh form should either be cognate to *Manannán* or be directly derived from it; in either case the *d* would be inexplicable. Now in Old Irish *nd* is a common orthographic form of *nn*, and *Manann* was also written *Manand*.⁷ It can be easily understood that Irish *Manand*, which of course should be transliterated into Welsh as *Manann*, could be copied from writing as *Manauid* which in the normal Early Mod. Welsh of our manuscripts would be written *Manawyt*, (*t=d*) since *u*, *n*, *ni*, *in*, are regularly confused by copyists of all periods.⁸

The name *Manawydan* thus owes its form to a clerical error like a host of Welsh names in the Arthurian cycle. One example of these will show clearly how ignorance of the orthographic devices of the language from which the name

¹ In the dative plural *Lugovibus*. For a full treatment see MM, pp. 61-2, 237.

² See the author's note, B. VII. pp. 1-4. ³ BT, p. 66, MM, pp. 265-6.

⁴ WB, 230; see Kuno Meyer in THSC, 1895-6.

⁵ WB, *loc. ci*

⁶ *Ibid.* The RB copyist (p. 106) has departed even further from the original by writing *Phercos*, because he took the *f* of his archetype as the spirant mutation of *p* after the conjunction *a*.

⁷ Rhŷs, CH, 663.

⁸ The name *Manawydan* is discussed by Sir Ifor Williams, B. iii, 49. He confirms that the correct modern transliteration of the *d* in WB *Manawydan* is *d* and not *dd* (= *dh*) as supposed by earlier editors. See also Sir John Morris-Jones, *Taliesin*, 237.

is taken can be responsible for a new form. Medial *w* was in Old Welsh and Early Middle Welsh represented by *gu*, and therefore *Branwen* was written *Branguen* but pronounced *Branwen*, and so we have in Arthurian romance the form *Brangien*. More significant still is *Llew Llaw Gyffes* in *Math*, where the original *Lleu* has been misread as *Llew* by the copyist, because *u* in his archetype could stand for *u* or *w*.¹ It is not sufficiently appreciated by Arthurian scholars, whether native or foreign, that mutilation of names and incidents from Celtic legend was not confined to the stage when the tales were recited or written in French. They had already in the Celtic countries a vast history of change and manipulation long before foreign writers of romance had shown any interest in them, and it is therefore useless to depend on the present form of a name as a *description* of its bearer as some foreign scholars do.

To return to the role of Manawydan in the Mabinogi, why, of all the heroes of Welsh romance, was he chosen to play a part so entirely contradictory of tradition? I do not pretend to be able to answer that question since it represents one of the most difficult puzzles in the field of Celtic romance. I can only set down such pieces of evidence as might, taken together, point the way to a solution.

Manawydan is mentioned in two Triads, both of which are referred to in the Mabinogi. The first is when Pryderi consoles Manawydan for the loss of his property at the hands of Caswallon and says 'You have never been a claimant for land; you are one of the three *lleddv* lords'. (For the time being, *lleddv* may be taken to mean 'passive'). Now a man could not be celebrated in the triad unless he already had a reputation of being *lleddv*, that is to say, unless the tradition about his *lledvdvder* was already in existence; unless, in short, his story was already being recited or had been committed

¹ I take this opportunity of correcting the explanation of *Cyffes* which I gave in MM, pp. 62-3. The compound of *co-* and *mess* is not *cyves* as I stated but *cymes*. Now medial *v* was written *m* in Old Welsh, and a scribe faced with the unfamiliar epithet *cimes* could modernise it in his text as either *cyves* or *cymes*. In this case he chose wrongly and wrote *cyves* or *cyfes*. Since medial *v* in Middle Welsh was regularly written *fu* and *ff*, we have *cyffes* in the name which should have been written as *Lleu Llaw Gymes*.

to writing. And of course, as Sir Ifor Williams points out in his note,¹ it is strange to find the Triads quoted to the man commemorated in them—which means that this, like all the other references to the Triads in the mabinogion, is either a gloss added by a copyist or even an interpolation by the author into the legend which he was developing. In any case, it will be agreed that the Triads must be later than the events or characters which they commemorate. But the question arises—what do they commemorate? What does this particular triad of Manawydan's *lleddvder* commemorate? Is it the specific action of the *Mabinogi of Manawydan*, or a tradition about Manawydan antecedent to the mabinogi and perhaps differing from it? If the latter, that is to say, if Manawydan was already in Welsh story tradition the *lleddv* man *par excellence*, then it is easy to understand why he should be drawn into the orbit of the *Waste Land* episode where the hero or heroine must necessarily be landless, and if he acquiesced in his condition, then he was also *lleddv*.

The meaning of *lleddv* in this context is difficult to define, as may be judged from the variety of versions given by the translators—‘disinherited’ (Guest); ‘prince sans l'être’ ‘oblique’ (Loth); ‘gentle’ (Ellis and Lloyd); ‘humble’ (Ifor Williams); ‘ungrasping’ (T. Jones and Gwyn Jones). It seems to me that not one of these translations is entirely satisfactory, since the first meaning of *lleddv* is, like that of Latin *pronus*, ‘inclined’ ‘lying down’ and the secondary meaning, ‘supine’ ‘disinclined to action’ ‘inert’ ‘indolent’ and ‘passive’. Since both the triad and Pryderi's statement emphasise Manawydan's neglect to claim his own or other property, it seems that the reference is to a legend in which Manawydan is deprived of his lands and passively acquiesces in the deprivation. If that legend, as we have suggested above, named Caswallon as the villain and usurper, then it is natural that his cousin Manawydan, the son of Llŷr, should be designated as the victim whose kingdom had been stolen.

This supposition, however, will not take us very far, since

¹ PKM, p. 228.

it is more than probable that the Llŷr family is a latecomer from Ireland into British pedigrees; Llŷr is regularly confused in the traditional pedigrees with Lludd, who in turn seems to be a mere doublet of the genuinely mythological Nudd, the Nodens of the inscriptions, and the Nuadh of Ireland. The question still remains unsolved at what stage in the development of the material on which this mabinogi is based, Manawydan son of Llŷr was put into a triad. I suggest tentatively that it may be based on a legend in which Caswallon deprived someone of his property and in which that someone was too *lleddu* to retaliate, and that Manawydan was the name given to the sufferer, in spite of his bad character in Ireland, because Caswallon, brother of Lludd (*Lud*) according to Geoffrey¹, had become Caswallon brother of Llŷr, and therefore Manawydan's wicked uncle.

The second triad concerning Manawydan presents fewer difficulties. After the events in Section 4, when he and Pryderi worked as shoemakers, it is said as follows :

And he began to associate himself with the best gilder in the town, and ordered buckles for the shoes, and to have them gilded, and he himself took notice of that until he had learnt it. *And it was for that reason that he was called One of the Three Gold Cordwainers.* As long as shoe or boot could be had from him, nothing was bought from a shoemaker in the whole town. And the shoemakers found that they were losing their profit, *because as Manawydan fashioned the work, Pryderi stitched it.* The shoemakers came and took counsel . . .

Now it is obvious that both the sentences in italics are later insertions, because they make two clear parentheses in the narrative. If that is so, then the triad had an independent existence before *Manawydan* assumed its definite form, but was quoted *not* by the author who would have used it more artistically, but by a later copyist or even a glossator. The triad however was either based on a cyvarwyddyd in which

¹ GRB, p. 301.

Manawydan played the same part as he does in the mabinogi or on a tradition connecting him with this particular handicraft. That Manannán was traditionally in Ireland the craftsman *par excellence* is certain, '*druí side dano ocus cerd ocus cennaige*', 'A druid was he too and a craftsman and a chapman'.¹ In *Manawydan* we find him acting not only as a craftsman, making different articles, but also as a chapman, selling them, but there is no trace of his famous 'druidism', that is wizardry.

The triad quoted in the mabinogi is thus given in RB.²

The three Gold Cordwainers of the Island of Britain :
Casswallawc (*sic*) Son of Beli, when he went to find
Flur as far as Rome and Manawydan son of Lludd
when enchantment was on Dyved, and Llew Llawgyffes
when he and Gwydion were seeking name and arms
from Aranrod his mother.

It seems to me that the gilding in *Manawydan* and the speckling of leather with gold in *Math* to which the triad refers are a very inadequate reason for celebration in a triad as '*golden* shoemakers'. Surely the significant incident is the *making* of shoes in both of the mabinogion and it looks as if the meagre mention of gilding in the one and speckling with gold in the other were simply added to justify the wording of the triad, 'Gold Cordwainers'. It is possible that the older tradition was that they made golden shoes by *magic* just like the many golden slippers of European folk-lore—since both Manawydan and Gwydion were famous as magicians. What need had they, when acting in their traditional characters, to purchase leather and fashion shoes when they could materialise them fully fashioned by a mere flick of the wand?

The explanation is to be found in the oldest mythology of the Celts. I have already suggested³ that 'a group of father-and-son were well-known in Celtic mythology as Lugoves, and as the patrons of shoemakers'. In *Math*, father and son and in *Manawydan*, step-father and step-son,

¹ *Rennes Dindsenchas*. RC, xvi, 276.

² p. 308.

³ MM, p. 238.

work together at their trade, and perhaps the folk-memory of the myth was so strong as to override another tradition about a changing of gold into shoes dimly commemorated in the triad. The sentence in italics in the passage above, as I have already said, breaks into the flow of the narrative ; probably the later copyist or glossator remembered the father-and-son legend and hastily inserted that sentence into what he was copying. There is no explanation of the introductory 'because' except as giving a reason for a statement immediately preceding. The sentence 'because as Manawydan fashioned the work, Pryderi stitched it' does not explain the preceding statement that the men of the town would only buy from Manawydan ; it is, in short, unintelligible. The only sentence which can logically precede the 'because' clause, would be 'and they worked together as a pair'.¹

There is yet another point to be considered before we can attempt to decide how Manannán the evil wizard became Manawydan the passive cordwainer of the mabinogi. *Manawyd* is the ordinary Welsh word for a shoemaker's awl, and Manawydan is actually called by that shortened form in Welsh poetry.² It has already been suggested more than once³ that the fact that *manawyd* means 'awl' accounts for Manawydan being designated as one of the three cordwainers of tradition and for the part assigned to him in the Mabinogi.

It cannot, perhaps, be said that any of the facts we have just discussed are sufficient, even if taken together, to explain what happened during the evolution of the mabinogi from primitive myth to folk-lore, from folk-lore to cyvarwyddyd, from cyvarwyddyd to some kind of recited story, and from recited story to the finished mabinogi of literature. It may be said, however, with confidence that each one of these facts is relevant and further, that it is probable that one or more of them, at some stage or another, contributed to the final development. It is of course well-known to storyologists

¹ For a discussion of the whole question v. MM. pp. 238-43.

² FAB, I, 78. CA. p. 2. ³ E.g. Rhŷs, CH, 665 ; Ifor Williams, B. iii, 49.

that contamination from an outside source is cumulative ; that is to say, once a theme or a name has lodged itself, so to speak, in the body of a folk story, it attracts its own kind from other stories, so that the parasite in the end kills its host and lives an independent life of its own. If the elements in a tale handed down orally be ABCDE and if the elements of another tale be AFGH, we often find that the common element A has attracted AFG from the second to the first, so that we get AFGDE where FG has supplanted BC. Then from a third story AGJK the new complex may attract GJK, substitute them for DE, and form a new totality AFJK almost completely different from the original nucleus.¹

We have already seen in our discussion of *Pwyll* that in the Irish story CM, cognate with the *Combert* of Pryderi, it is definitely stated that 'this Mongán is a son of Manannán mac Lir, though he is called Mongán son of Fiachna'.² Pryderi or Gwri, therefore, the British counterpart of Mongán, was probably in some cyvarwyddyd or other named as the son of Manawydan, the Other-world king who had gained access to his mother ; this, of course, by itself might explain why he appears as Pryderi's step-father in *Manawydan*. When the author was faced with a cyvarwyddyd which named Manawydan as the actual father of Gwri-Pryderi, he found himself in a difficulty since in *Pwyll*, Manawydan is not even mentioned, his place being taken by Arawn but originally, as we have seen, by Pwyll Pen Annwvn. That is to say, his Other-world father who had assumed the form of his mother's husband was according to the final version of *Pwyll* someone other than Manawydan, or to put it in another way, the name of the Other-world King in the mabinogi of *Pwyll* was not Manawydan. But when the author came to write the Third Branch he found in that cyvarwyddyd a different tradition which allotted to Manawydan the role of father, so in accordance with what is usual in the mabinogion and similar tales, he had to invent

¹ For a fuller discussion see MM, 298-9 ; Loomis, AT, 38-58.

² See p. 25.

a brand-new incident to explain the discrepancy, a new link to join old chains of dissimilar pitch. This he did, rather clumsily, by making Pryderi arrange with much circumstance a marriage between Manawydan and Rhiannon his mother, so that there was now a more or less satisfactory answer to any critic who, remembering *Pwyll*, might object that the Head of Annwvn, Pryderi's Other-world father was not Manawydan, and therefore could not play the part assigned to him in the Third Branch.

We may now make a tentative sketch of the process by which the different characters in *Manawydan* have assumed their present positions in the story :

1. The primitive basis is the myth of the Waste Land in which the Mother seeks her lost child, carried off by the King of the Other-world. This myth will be discussed later.
2. To this nucleus is attracted a *compert* legend of a visit by the King of the Other-world to the wife of a mortal, and the consequent birth of the Hero. The Other-world king is Manannán-Manawydan. Later Manannán carries off his son (CMS, p. 29). This stage of the development was probably in Irish Dyved,¹ and was the source of *Mabinogi of Mynweir a Mynord* referred to at the end of *Manawydan*.
3. Contamination by a British legend of the usurper and evil magician Caswallon, who in a Cloak of Enchantment slays the men of Britain and lays waste the land. He takes the place of the more famous magician Manannán-Manawydan, and Manawydan becomes the victim.
4. Manawydan as the father of the Hero now loses his bad character since Caswallon has taken his place as the *gormes*,² and since he is an innocent victim.

¹ For a discussion of the Irish in Wales, see MM, 342 and *passim*.

² For *gormes*, see note, p. 21.

5. The story so far developed is cast into the framework of one of the versions of the *Eustace* legend, popular in England.
6. Since the *Eustace* legend must have for a protagonist not the mother who loses her son, but the father who loses wife and son in two stages, first the son then the wife, Manawydan as the father of Pryderi has to lose both son and wife and becomes the *exemplum* of the suffering Christian gentleman.
7. The evil magician in *Pwyll* was Gwawl vab Clud so he, working through another and better-known magician, Liath mac Celtchair whose name had survived in Dyved from the Irish period, supplants Caswallon whose activities are relegated to a mere explanatory paragraph unconnected with the main events. In time Liath mac Celtchair's name is given a topical Dyved connexion by calling him 'Llwyd vab Cilcoed,' *Eglwys Lwyd* and *Cilcoed* being places in Dyved.

The order in which it is suggested that these changes took place was probably the one given above, though a different sequence is possible. The most clearly marked point in the course of the evolution is when the old cyvarwyddyd, the *Mabinogi of Mynweir a Mynord*, attracted the story of the magician Caswallon. It is possible that it was then that Gweir, the protagonist of *Mynweir a Mynord* (see Chap. V.), became the Pryderi of *Manawydan*. That change, of course, would have taken place before the final formation of *Pwyll*.

V

RHIANNON

IT has taken us a long time to cover the preliminary questions which must be considered before we can finally answer why Rhiannon in *Pwyll*, though she was accused of having killed her child, was punished by being compelled to act as a horse. Those preliminary questions have involved us in a more or less detailed study of the Third Branch, *Manawydan*, which records other incidents in the lives of Rhiannon and her son Pryderi. That mabinogi after describing the release of Rhiannon and Pryderi ends with these words :

“ “ What manner of servitude was it in which Pryderi and Rhiannon were ? ” said he [Manawydan]. “ Pryderi had the hammers (*yrdd*) of the gate of my court round his neck (*mynwgyll*), and Rhiannon had the collars (*mynweireu*) of the she-asses after they had been gathering hay (*gweir*) around her neck, and in this fashion was their prison ”. And on account of that prison, that cyvarwyddyd was called “ Mabinogi Mynweir a Mynord ”. And so ends this branch of the Mabinogi ’.

This confused and improbable explanation of the imprisonment bristles with difficulties. One thing however is evident—it is an onomastic tale to explain the names of the protagonists who are here called *Mynweir* and *Mynord*, names not even remotely resembling anything in *Manawydan* in its present form. There seem to be two layers of onomastic legend, one to explain the *myn* element, and the other to explain *weir*, the mutated form of *gweir*. Further, as we shall see, there has been an interchange of the penalties of Pryderi and Rhiannon. It is the son’s name *Mynweir* which should be explained by *gweir* and the mother’s name *Mynord* by *yrdd*, the plural of *ord* (*d=dd*).

It is now necessary to summarise what I wrote many years ago as a preliminary to the study of the myth of Rhiannon.¹

Gweir, whose name is explained in the onomastic story quoted above, is one of the famous prisoners of Welsh tradition. He appears in the triads, where he and Llŷr and Mabon are the three *goruchel* prisoners ('prisoners above all others', 'prisoners *par excellence*') of Britain. He is also commemorated in a verse in the *Book of Taliesin*:²

'Prepared was the prison of Gweir in Caer Siddi according to the tale (*ebostol*) of Pwyll and Pryderi.'

The rest of the verse like all the Taliesin poems shows a confusion of mythical traditions. Here the confusion is between the raid on Annwvn by Pryderi which, as I hope on a later occasion to show, is the basic myth of *Branwen*, and the deliverance of Gweir from Caer Siddi, but under all the confusion is the definite connexion of Gweir with the 'tale of Pwyll and Pryderi' which I take to represent a stage in the cyfarwyddyd on which the first and third Branches were founded; in short, Gweir is one of the protagonists of the mabinogi tradition, the saga of Pryderi. The other famous prisoner was Mabon son of Modron whose prison on the Severn and whose deliverance by Arthur are described at length in *Kulhwch ac Olwen*. He was stolen from his mother when three nights old; that is to say, his story is precisely that of Mongán and Gwri Wallt Eurin.

Gwri (Pryderi's name before he was restored to his mother) also occurs as Gware, Gwarae, Gwrvan, in the list of warriors in *Kulhwch* where, in one place,³ he is actually coupled with Mabon—'Mabon vab Mellet and Gware Gwallt Eyrn'.⁴ Gweir in the first of the triads which mention him⁵ is called

¹ RC, xxxiii, pp. 452 ff; *Cymmrodor*, xlii, pp. 129 ff. The later article also published separately in pamphlet form, *Mabon vab Modron*, 1930.

² Fo, 25; Skene FAB, ii, 181.

³ RB, 134.

⁴ The significance of the coupling of the two names is that the list in *Culhwch* is derived from older lists, triads, tales, etc. These two names were taken from a list or a triad of famous prisoners.

⁵ RB, 300.

Geir, and in the triadic phrase in *Kulhwch*, he is called Greid son of Eri. Mabon says to his deliverers :

‘It is Mabon son of Modron who is here imprisoned, and no one was ever so cruelly confined in any shape (*llwrw*) of prison as I am, neither the prison of Lludd Llaw Ereint nor the prison of Greid mab Eri.’

I suggest that in *Greid mab Eri*, unknown outside *Kulhwch*, we have a copyist’s error, or a series of errors, for *Pryderi*; that is to say, in an older orthography, *Priteri* was copied as *Griteri* and the two elements afterwards separated, so that Eri became the father of Gr[e]id.

We have thus two parallel versions of the great imprisonment of Celtic or at least Brythonic mythology—the legend cycle of Mabon son of Modron, and of Gwri-Gweir son of Rhiannon, the former being probably the ‘official’ version, so to speak, because Mabon was actually a god identified in inscriptions¹ with Apollo, as *Apollo Maponos*. The name means ‘the Great Son’ or ‘the Great Youth’.

Like many other Welsh traditions, the story of Mabon-Gweir plays an important part in Arthurian romance. In Chrétien’s *Erec*, Erec comes to the castle of Brandiganz belonging to King Evrain. It is girt about by walls and has a wonderful orchard,² but, as many writers have pointed out, it is nothing more than a magic prison.³ Here he is confronted with the giant Mabonagrain whom he fights and conquers, but *no one had ever known the giant’s name in any country*; that is to say, he had passed out of the memory of all living men. He is kept a prisoner in the castle by a woman; he will be freed when he is conquered by a challenger from the outside. He is now therefore delivered from his captivity and Erec blows the horn which is suspended in the court to celebrate the event. There is great joy.

The above is a very simplified summary of an elaborate, tedious, and confused episode in *Erec*. Gaston Paris’s opinion

¹ Full discussion by Rhys, CH, 21, 27-8.

² *Erec*, vv 5367 ff. ³ *Romania* (1896), pp. 288 ff; Loomis CT, pp. 168 ff.

of it was, 'il est assurément impossible d'imaginer quelque chose de plus absurde, de plus incohérent et . . . de moins intéressant que ce récit . . . Il est clair qu'on se trouve en présence d'un vieux conte mal transmis, que le poète français ne comprenait plus et qu'il a rendu encore plus inintelligible en essayant de l'expliquer'.¹ M. Paris's condemnation of this episode as an inartistic jumble is justified when we compare with it the parallel account in the Welsh *Geraint* which is succinct, logical, and restrained, but which unfortunately does not contain the name *Mabonagrain*, and gives *Ywain* and *Eywein*² as the name corresponding to Chrétien's *Eurain*. It does however preserve one all-important detail which Chrétien has omitted—the place of combat is surrounded by a hedge (*cae*) of mist, and the conditions on which Geraint gives quarter to the vanquished knight are given in words almost identical with those used by Manawydan to the Magician whom he had outwitted. Thus :

Manawydan: 'Name her ransom' [said Llwyd vab Cilcoed]. 'That you should lift the spell and enchantment on the seven cantrevs of Dyved . . . [and] that there be no spell ever on . . . Dyved, and that none be cast on it'.

Geraint: 'Alas, lord' said he the knight, 'give quarter and you shall have what you wish'. 'I wish nothing' said he, 'but that there never be here this game (*gware*), nor the hedge of mist nor the spell nor enchantment that has been'.

I am inclined to find here the debris of an onomastic story in an earlier version to explain *Gware*, which as we have seen is a variant of *Gweir*.

The name *Mabonagrain* is explained by M. E. Philipot :

'Il est la synthèse de deux noms que nous trouvons appliqués à deux personnages différents dans la groupe du *Bel Inconnu* et dans *Erec* lui-même. On sait que

¹ *Romania* (1891), p. 154.

² WB, col. 446.

l'enchantement de la " Gaste Cité " qui a totalement disparu du récit d'*Erec* . . . [and which is, as we have seen, recorded in *Geraint*] est l'oeuvre de deux personnages maudits. L'un nommé Mabon est de beaucoup le plus important " le plus sires " (v. 3321) . . . Dans *Le Beaus Desconnus* le premier s'appelle Maboun ou Mabounis, le second s'appelle Irayn'.¹

M. Philipot suggests that *Irayn* is the Welsh *Euryn* of the name of Gwri Wallt Eurin and that *Mabonagrain* is compounded of the names of the two magicians, Mabon and Eurin. It may be added that Mabon, in the form of Mabuz, Ider fiz Nuz (Edern vab Nudd), and Merlin are the three prime magicians of Arthurian romance on the continent.

How the prisoner became the captive is simply explained. There are even in the rather meagre literature which has survived in Welsh ample references to *carchar Gweir* and *carchar Mabon*, the ' prison of Gweir ', the ' prison of Mabon ', phrases which, like the ' love of God ' and others, are even more ambiguous in Welsh than in English and old French, because Welsh has no distinct form for the possessive case. ' The prison of Gweir ' then, though it originally meant the place where Gweir was imprisoned, can be more easily understood to mean ' the prison possessed by Gweir ', and once that mistake has been made, the captive becomes the captor. Thus both Gweir and Mabon, instead of being the victims of wizardry have themselves become wizards. The same is apparently true of Myrddin (Merlin) who was first victim of malevolent magic and then became the wizard of romance *par excellence*.

I accept M. Philipot's identification of *Irayn* and the *-agrain* of *Mabonagrain* with the *Eurin* of Gwri's name in *Pwyll*. The *Eywein* of WB seems to be due to some such name in the old French original of *Geraint*; it is only later in the WB version that *Eywein* has definitely become *Ywein* which was copied as *Owein* in RB. We may go a step further and suggest that the names of Mabon and Eurin

¹ *Romania*, loc. cit.

were compounded together because they both designate the same mythological personage.

We now come at last to the mysterious *Mynweir a Mynord* which was the old name of the cyvarwyddyd on which *Manawydan* was based.

It is not difficult to guess the scribal relation between *Gweir* and *Gwri*, since as we have seen more than once already, the combinations *ir*, *ri* and *in*, *ni* are the most common causes of mis-copying in old manuscripts.¹ *Gweir* was miscopied as *Gweri*, and was further corrupted to *Gwri*, *Gware*, and *Gwrwan*; of these the first appears in *Pwyll* and the others in *Culhwch*. The epithet *Eurin* in *Gwallt Eurin*, or in the WB and RB orthography *Gwallt Euryrn*, is, I suggest, merely a doublet of the same name *Gweir*. It appears in English romance as *Irayn*, and as *Agrain* in the compound *Mabon-agrain*. The mabinogi explains the name *eurin* 'golden', by saying that 'what hair was on his head was like gold' but this is one of those onomastic post-hoc interpretations so abundant in the Four Branches; once *eurin* was established it was inevitable that *gwallt* 'hair' should be joined to it to make an intelligible epithet. It should be remembered that in *Culhwch* the name appears as *Gwrwan Wallt Awwyn*,² a further proof of the copyist's uncertainty as to the true form.

There were then two famous wizards in Arthurian Romance, both of them ultimately developed from the two prisoners of Welsh tradition—Mabon who was according to *Kulhwch* taken away from his mother Modron when he was three nights old, and Gweir-Gwri who was carried off from his mother's bed soon after birth. Now I think that it would be a mistake merely to suppose that Mabon and Gweir are the same person under two names, like Jacob and Israel in the Old Testament; they are rather characters in two parallel mythical traditions which became merged together. One of the myths was that of Rhiannon, the Great Queen

¹ The same abbreviation sign was used in the MSS for *ir* and *er*, and for *yr* and *ry*. See *Elucidarium and Other Tracts*, p. xvii.

² RB, 110.

Goddess, whose son Gweir was raped from her by his Other-world father ; the other was that of Modron, the Great Mother Goddess whose son Mabon was raped from her by the King of Annwvn. How these parallel myths may have coalesced we shall see later.

In the title of the old cyfarwyddyd *Mynweir and Mynord*, we have *Gweir* from one mythical tradition and *Modron* from the other. *Mynord* does not correspond to any known name in Welsh or Irish story and therefore, if it did originally denote a known character, must be the result of an error or a series of errors due to mis-copying. Now *Modron* appears as *Mydron* in one manuscript in the name *Mabon am Mydron*,¹ where *am* is of course for *ab*, 'son of', due to nasalisation by the following *m*. The first stage then in the later scribal evolution of the pair *Gweir a Modron* is the spelling *Mydron*. In the older manuscripts a final or even medial *n* is regularly denoted by a - mark over the vowel, so that the next stage would be *Gweir a Mydrō*. If a later copyist was careless in the placing of his - mark, what he wrote might be miscopied as *Mydro*, that is *Myndro*, yielding finally *Mynord*.

It is well known that, for some reason, names which are regularly found in pair are in the old Welsh romances and other documents made to rhyme or to form a jingle, even if it means a substantial change in one or both of them ; thus *Sodom a Gomorra* appear as *Souir ac Ovir*, for *Sovir a Govir*, where *Sodoma* has been mutilated beyond recognition in order to form a pair with *Govir*, *vir* being, as usually, a miscopy of *vur* in *Govur*, the philologically regular derivative of *Gomorra*.² So in *Kulhwch* we find *Se ac Asse*, *Sach a Salach*, *Lotor a Ffotor* as the names of *caers*.³

It will be noticed that only the first name in the pair *Sovir a Govir* is mutilated to form a rhyme. It was thus that *Mynord* stood unchanged and *Gweir* became *Mynweir*.

¹ BBC, 94.

² *The Elucidarium and Other Tracts*, p. 157.

³ For what it is worth one might suggest that these names are based on *Caer Seon* of BT, *Caer Salem* (Jerusalem) and *Caer Lut* (= Ludd) (London).

Faced with this pair of names the cyvarwydd, according to a habit which has given many valuable clues to the storyologist, turns to invent an onomastic explanation. But this had been done once already when the first cyvarwydd had before him not *Mynweir* but *Gweir*, so he explains the name by a story about the she-asses gathering *gweir* (hay). The next cyvarwydd has the later *Mynweir a Mynord* and, forgetting that *gweir* was already in his story, and had been explained, went on to interpret *mynweir* as the plural of *mynwar* 'horse-collar', and under the influence of the 'collar' theme explained *Mynord* as from *ord*, the singular of *yrdd* (Mod. W. *yrdd* 'hammers'), placed round the *neck* of the victim. He or a subsequent cyvarwydd or copyist or perhaps the author added to the confusion by transferring the *yrdd* to Pryderi-Gweir and the *mynweir* to Rhiannon.

The story of Mabon forms one of the *anoetheu* or 'marvels' in *Kulhwch*. He is the immemorial prisoner whom the world has forgotten because he was captured almost at the beginning of time just as Mabonagrain had passed from the memory of all living men; this the author of *Kulhwch* conveys most artistically to the reader by means of the famous folk-tale of the *Oldest Animals*.¹ He is finally delivered by Arthur, but Arthur's connexion with the myth need not be taken seriously—it is just another instance of the way in which many other legendary exploits were credited to him, first in Wales itself² and then with a growing momentum of enthusiasm, in French romance. The *Kulhwch* account is prefaced by an obvious doublet of the same tradition, where the prisoner is called Eidoel vab Aer, 'a kinsman of Mabon', held captive by Glini,³ which proves, if proof were necessary, that the same legend may be told of various persons.

¹ See Cowell, C. v. 169 ff; Gruffydd, C. xlii, 129 ff; T. Jones, NLWJ, VII, 1 (1951).

² E.g. Pryderi's raid on Annwvn to secure the Head of Annwvn's Cauldron in the poem *Preiddeu Annwvn* in BT. This, as I hope to show in another inquiry, was the original nucleus of *Branwen*.

³ A copyist's version of *Glevi* in the Latin name of Gloucester *Castra Glevi* where, apparently both Mabon and Eidoel were held.

To summarise our conclusions. There were two main versions of the myth which underlies the story of the Waste Land. The first is that of Modron and her son Mabon, and, as far as we can judge, is localised at Gloucester ; the other is that of Rhiannon and her son Gweir which became attached to the saga of Pryderi of Dyved.

We have seen that Mabon and his mother Modron are genuine mythological figures, since the former had altars dedicated to him, and the latter like the goddess Danubia gave her name to rivers. *Mabon* is from the British *Maponos* and *Modron* from Gaulish and British *Mātrona* from which the river Marne was named. The name *Rhiannon* has long been recognised by Celtic scholars as the exact modern Welsh derivative of a British *Rīgantona*, the 'Great Queen', and is related to Welsh *rhiain*, *rhianedd* 'lady, ladies', from **rīgania*-. *Modron*, *Rhiannon*, *Mabon*, as well as *Teyrnon* and *Gwron* (to be discussed later) have the *-onos*, *-ona* termination which is the usual mark of the name of a divinity, as in *Sirona*, *Epona*, *Axona*, etc.

Modron then is the Great Mother, or the Mother Goddess and Mabon the Great Son or the Great Youth, or, as he is in the inscriptions identified with Apollo, the Youth God. As one would expect, both Modron and Mabon have been appropriated as saints by the early Church, and both have churches dedicated to them in Wales ; hagiology is notoriously unreliable, but we often find genuine material imbedded in the pedigrees and the lives of the saints. *Mātrona* seems to have entered the Roman Church, as might be expected, under the Latin form of her name, *Matrōna*, which gave in Welsh *Madrūn*. *Madrūn* is said to be the patron saint of Trawsfynydd in Merioneth, and of other churches in Cornwall and Brittany and according to the legend, was first the wife of Ynyr *Gwent* and then of Gwgon *Gwron*. She is represented in iconography as fleeing from disaster with a small child in her arms. It is also said that her daughter eloped with a craftsman who cut off her head.¹

¹ Baring Gould and Fisher. LBS, iii, 398 ; *Buchedd Beuno* in ET, pp. 107-9.

Whether we can legitimately make use of these hagiological traditions is debatable, but for what they are worth, three details may be noted. (1) Her husband was Lord of Gwent, just as Teyrnnon was, and Teyrnnon was in his own myth, as we shall see, the husband of Rhiannon. (2) Her second husband is named Gwgon Gwron. Now *Gwron* goes back regularly to British **Vironos*, the 'Great Man'. (3) She was represented as the mother fleeing in distress with her child in her arms.

No. 3 probably represents a genuine tradition of the Great Mother of mythology. No. 2 completes the family of divinities—*Vironos* the father, *Matrona* the mother, *Maponos* the son. The fact that *Madrun* is credited in one source as having a husband in Gwent and in another as having a second husband called *Gwron* may mean that she had one husband *Gwron* who lived in Gwent.

Is it now possible to find similar relationships in the parallel legend of Rhiannon? It will be remembered that in the *Pwyll* version of the Rape of *Gwri*, Teyrnnon is not only the deliverer, he is also *believed by all his subjects to be the father of Gwri*. This is specifically stated in the *Mabinogi* :

“There is a baby (or son) for you here”, [said Teyrnnon to his wife] “if you will have him who was never yours.” . . . “Lord,” said she, “if you wished I could bring women to agree with me and would say that I am pregnant.” “I will gladly join with you in that” said he . . . The child was brought up in the court’.

We have here again an instance of the cyvarwydd’s invention in ironing out a contradiction. If any objector were to say, ‘but I have always heard that Teyrnnon was the father of *Gwri*’, he could be answered by the cyvarwydd—‘that is because Teyrnnon and his wife conspired to *pretend* that *Gwri* was their own child’. This is the only possible explanation of the recording of the conspiracy between Teyrnnon and his wife.

Teyrnnon is the exact representative of British **Tigernonos*, ‘the Great King’ and therefore makes a perfect pair with

Rhiannon 'the Great Queen', just as *Gwron* makes a pair with *Modron*. We may now set down the two parallel traditions as follows :

Rhiannon Myth

Tigernonos — Rigantona
 |
 (Gweir)

Modron Myth

Vironos — Matrona
 |
 Maponos

or, using the names in the *Mabinogion* and elsewhere in Welsh :

Teyrnnon — Rhiannon
 |
 Gweir

Gwron — Modron
 |
 Mabon

The mythical history of *Modron* has not been preserved in Wales apart from hagiology ; we know of her only as the mother of *Mabon*. Her name, however, 'the Great Mother' is one of the best known in Greek lands of Asia Minor and Europe where she figures under many designations. The Hellenic *Demeter* 'the Earth Mother', or possibly the 'Real Mother', had attracted to herself the myth of the Asiatic *Magna Mater* and *Cybele* so that it is now difficult to assign the separate elements to their real origin. It is however agreed that the main difference between them is that of locality of worship, and that both *Demeter* and the Great Mother were goddesses of fertility, but I am not concerned with that aspect of the question. Indeed the impact on modern scholarship of Sir James Frazer's great work in his *Golden Bough* has diverted attention from the pure mythology—what may be called the history—of the divine beings of the ancient world to their 'cultural' significance, and this has in turn resulted in much unprofitable speculation and darkening of counsel. It is to be regretted that the great prince among Celtic scholars in this field, Sir John Rhys, set the fashion in his *Celtic*

Heathendom, and he has been followed by others less competent to handle this dangerous weapon. A. B. Cook, for instance, twists the contradictory facts about Manawydan and Cúroí into his scheme of the significance of the Greek Zeus without having first adequately examined the storyological development of their legends.¹ There have been so many transferences of names and functions and so much new invention in order to make the new complex plausible that speculation as to who was a god of light and who a god of darkness, who a goddess of fertility and who a resurrected god is largely unprofitable and can be disastrously misleading when further conclusions are based on it.

There are however certain names in mythology which definitely indicate the character of those who bear them. While the etymology of such names as *Manannán*, *Gweir*, *Pryderi*, *Pwyll* is a matter of conjecture, there can be no doubt about *Rhiannon*, *Teyrnon*, *Mabon*, *Modron*, *Magna Mater*, and the second element in *Demeter*, and when we find (1) that a pair of names agrees in significance, (2) that the characters who bear them agree in function, (3) that the meaning of the names is beyond doubt, and (4) that the names and the function in members of both pairs, respectively, are in agreement, we are completely justified in assuming that their 'histories', if not identical, are parallel.

Modron then, the Great Mother of the British branch of the Celts, has a history similar to that of the complex Demeter and Cybele, the usual name of the Great Mother of Asia Minor. She has a son Mabon who is abducted by the powers of the Other-world and is restored after a prolonged search, just as Cybele has her son Attis and Demeter her daughter Persephone, who when gathering flowers was captured by Pluto, the lord of the Other-world. While the captured child is held in durance, a pall of darkness falls on the world and great desolation on the land, all the crops fail and the fruits of the earth wither. When the child is restored to the upper world—whether it is Persephone or Attis—fertility

¹ See for example Cook's article "The European Sky-God" in *Folklore Transactions*, xvii.

and light return. An essential feature of the myth is the wandering of Demeter over the earth to seek her daughter, just as Rhiannon wanders in search of her son.

As far as the history of Mabon has been preserved in Welsh legend, we only know of the abduction and the detention, but in *Manawydan* there is a complete account of the disaster which follows the rape of Pryderi-Gweir, the son of the Great Queen, Rhiannon :

‘Behold, there was a thunderclap,’ and with the great thunder, a fall of mist came so that not one of them could see the other. [And after the mist every place was lit again.]¹ And when they looked in the direction where they were wont before to see the flocks and herds and habitations, they saw nothing at all—neither house, nor beast, nor man, nor habitation, but the houses of the court empty, desolate, deserted, without man, without beast within, their own companions lost with no trace of them, save the four only . . . They came to the hall : there was no one. They went into the parlour and the chambers ; they saw no one. In mead cellar and in kitchen there was nought but desolation.’

After this, Pryderi was enticed by a magical white boar into a deserted castle and disappeared from sight. When the enchantment is lifted and Pryderi restored :

‘When he looked, he saw all the land inhabited and furnished with all its herds and its dwellings.’

The descent of a god or goddess to Hades is found in almost every mythology.² One of the earliest of these descents is that of Ishtar in a Babylonian poem. She is imprisoned in Hell and is there afflicted with various diseases, and while she is away there is desolation on earth.³ This, of course, is the main incident in the mythology of Demeter, but in some parts of the Greek world, she had besides certain

¹ This sentence is certainly a later addition to the story ; it was added to make possible their seeing the desolation around them. Another instance of manipulation of material.

² Hastings, DRE, i, 70.

³ *Ibid.*

attributes which definitely connect her with a horse-cult. In Phygalia the 'Black' (*Melaina*) Demeter had the head and mane of a horse, and in Laconia her priests were called *πῶλοι* ('colts'),¹ so that those scholars who identify her worship with that of Epona, the Gaulish Horse-goddess, are amply justified, though, of course, they are distinct divinities. It may be noted that the worship of Demeter was 'most sacred' at Pessinus in Galatia, which was Celtic country; it was never popular in Greece itself owing to its 'barbarous' and un-Hellenic accompaniments. In the time of the Empire, her cult spread to all the provinces and was one of the strongest antagonists of Christianity,² so much so indeed that many of its features, such as the Descent to Hell influenced the uncanonical kind of Christianity found in the Apocryphal Gospels, and one of its characteristic phrases has even penetrated into the Apostles' Creed—'He descended into Hell'. In time Demeter and Cybele, the Great Mother, were fused together.³

It is probable that the old *cyfarwyddyd* in which these events were related was the *Mabinogi of Mynweir and Mynord* which has been here interpreted as the 'Mabinogi of Gweir and Modron'. The myth of the lost son in that case is a fusion of the parallel myths of Rhiannon-Gweir and Modron-Mabon, the son being taken from one and the mother from the other; that is to say, the story of Rhiannon and Gweir is so precisely that of Modron and Mabon that the corresponding characters have become interchangeable.

The question now arises, was Rhiannon also the Great Mother under the designation of the 'Great Queen'? It is likely that, by the time that the basic myth of *Pwyll-Manawydan* was formed, Rhiannon and Modron were identified as one, but it cannot be assumed that in the old forgotten Celtic Pantheon they were not distinct divinities. Now the title 'Queen' and 'Holy Queen,' *Regina* and *Regina sancta*, was given to Epona,⁴ whose characteristics, we

¹ *Ibid.*, and Pauly-Wissowa, *Encycl.* sub. *Phygalia* and *Demeter*.

² DRE *loc. cit.* ³ DRE sub 'Great Mother'.

⁴ Pauly-Wissowa, *Encycl.* sub *Epona*.

have seen, were shared by the Black Demeter of Phygalia. Epona was definitely the Celtic horse-goddess, her name being derived from **epos* ('horse'), the Gaulish and British equivalent of Latin *equus*, Greek ἵππος, and Old Irish *ech*, related to Welsh *ebol*, 'foal'. She is commemorated in over forty inscriptions including one on Hadrian's Wall. She was adopted by the Romans, but in the eleven inscriptions in the Cavalry Barracks of Rome, her devotees bear Gaulish names. Figures of Epona are plentiful, and are found usually in Gaulish lands, so that 'taking everything into consideration, Gaul seems to be Epona's land of origin'¹. She was identified with the Deae Matres, the Divine Mothers, *y Mamau*, and in statues is represented with horses, foals, mules, and asses, and in many of them as a riding woman, usually on a horse, once on a mule. In Pompeii she is figured as riding a donkey with a little child in her lap, exactly, it may be said, as the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt is pictured in medieval art. The horse is always shown *as walking or trotting, never galloping*.²

As she is regularly represented with cornucopias, she was regarded as the goddess of fertility like Demeter and the Great Mother. The Matres were associated with Epona on the same monument³; in fact '*Epona was originally Matrona with specialised functions*'.⁴ J. Becker describes her as 'the Riding Matrona' because of the similarity of her symbols to those of the Matronae.⁵ We are justified in translating this judgement into Welsh terms and say that the Holy Queen is Modron on horseback, or, bearing in mind the modern form of the name of *Rigantona*, that *Rhiannon is Modron on horseback*. Add to this that 'the Proto-Hellenic Demeter was derived from the Great Mother Goddess of Crete, who was portrayed *with doves*,'⁶ and that the only fact recorded of Rhiannon outside *Pwyll* was that she had birds which entertained those who sojourned in the land of the Celtic Elysium, as described in *Branwen*. All that we have said can only lead to one conclusion, that Rhiannon and

¹ *Ibid.*² *Ibid.*³ *Hasting, op. cit.*, sub *Epona*.⁴ *Ibid.*⁵ *Ibid.*⁶ *Massingham, Through the Wilderness*, 218.

Modron played comparable parts in Welsh mythology, and that Rhiannon was, or was identified with, the Horse-Goddess.

That is why in *Pwyll* the original charge of having given birth to a foal, her possession of a magic horse that never galloped but yet could not be overtaken, and her penance of carrying riders on her back like a mare came to be recorded — *they were all part of her myth as the Horse-Goddess*. Traces of her origin can be detected in *Manawydan* also, where in the main she plays the part of Demeter and Modron. In the onomastic treatment of the names *Mynweir* and *Mynord*, not only is the name *Gweir* explained, as we have seen, but it is said that Rhiannon's abductors tortured her by *hanging the she-asses' collars round her neck*; that is to say, her torture in *Manawydan* is, like her penance in *Pwyll*, a reminiscence of her myth as the goddess of horses and asses. Her penance in *Pwyll* was to be treated as a horse; her torture in *Manawydan* is to be treated as a she-ass.

It is probable that, at the time when the earlier cyvarwyddyd was taking shape, figures of Rigantona portrayed together with horses and asses, or even with a horse's head, or with a horse-collar round her neck, were still existent in parts of Wales and that her myth was still remembered. Since some of these myths were most likely introduced into Britain by Roman soldiers from Gaul, it is at least credible that both her statues and her myth survived the century or two between the end of the Roman occupation and the earliest formulation of the cyvarwyddyd on which the mabinogi is based. Those who still persist in the nineteenth-century distrust of tradition may well be reminded that a vestige of the *Taurobolium*, which was part of the Great Mother ritual, survived into the time of Queen Elizabeth. An Episcopal Inquisition in the latter years of her reign states that the parishioners of Clynnog in Arvon sacrificed a bull to Beuno, the patron saint, every Whitsuntide¹; even within the memory of men now living a calf

¹ *Calendar of State Papers*, 1581-90.

with certain markings, called *Nod Beuno* 'Beuno's mark' was dedicated to the patron saint. This is only one instance of folk-memory and tradition ; most of the others were destroyed by the Protestant Reformation and the Puritans, and the rest by the Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century and that great access of Puritanism in the nineteenth under which a vast amount of popular beliefs and practices were submerged.

We have seen that the son born to Rhiannon was Gweir whose name appears in *Pwyll* as Gwri, but who reappears as Gweir in the onomastic story at the end of *Manawydan*. It will be remembered that in *Pwyll* there is a particularly clumsy attempt to explain why his name was changed to Pryderi. Now Pryderi was traditionally the lord of Dyved, and we have seen reason to suppose that he was connected, not with Arberth but with the old chief town of Dyved, Tenby, and that the men of Tenby were granted a *braint*, 'privilege' because they had 'joined' with Pendaran Dyved in his fosterage. The part of the mabinogi which records this bears all the signs of manipulation in order to reconcile two conflicting accounts.

I suggest, therefore, with some confidence that we have in *Pwyll II* two separate and distinct persons—Gweir whose mother was Rhiannon, the euhemerized wife of the Chieftain of Dyved, and whose father was Pwyll Pen Annwn who begat him in the form and appearance of her husband ; and Pryderi, the traditional hero of Dyved, and the son of Pendaran Dyved. Since the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* had become at one stage in their development four incidents in the life of Pryderi, in the latter part of *Pwyll II* Pryderi ousted Gweir by the clumsy device of giving Gweir another name, but the fusion was not complete, since Pryderi does not take the place of Gweir in *Pwyll I* and in the first part of *Pwyll II*. Pwyll was retained as the father of Gweir, but his description—again by a clumsy device—was modified so as to eliminate his title as Head of Annwn and a new title,

Pendevig Dyved,¹ was given him temporarily as a compromise for Pendaran Dyved.

The Horse-Goddess, Rigantona, was euhemerized to become the Queen of Dyved, but retained in *Pwyll* and *Manawydan* her mythological characteristics. Her husband in mythology was Tigernonos and traces of this relationship remain in *Pwyll II* in the attempt to explain Teyrnnon as having conspired to *pretend* that he was the father of Gweir, her mythological son. As queen of Dyved, however, Rhiannon sheds her mythology and is given a folk-lore history from the legends of Dyved. According to this her husband would be Pendaran Dyved and her son the quasi-historical Pryderi—it will be remembered that it was Pendaran Dyved who seemed to have the right to insist that the child's name should be Pryderi :

‘ Lady ’, said Pendaran Dyved, ‘ well hast thou named thy son Pryderi ’.

But Rhiannon objects :

‘ Consider ’, said Rhiannon, ‘ whether his *own* name does not befit him best ’.

Pendaran does not know the child's ‘ own name ’ and asks what it is, and when told that it is Gwri Wallt Eurin, he says authoritatively without further argument :

‘ Pryderi *shall* be his name ’.

Then at one stage, the Irish *compert* of the *Mongán* type was introduced in which Rhiannon's son is begotten by Pwyll Head of Annwvn, and there is consequently a change in

¹ *Pendevig* as a specific title of rank is extremely rare. In the Peniarth 20 version of *Br. T.* (T. Jones's edition, p. 75) Cedivor ap Gollwyn is described as ‘ *y gwr a vu bendeveg ar holl Dyved*, ‘ the man who was *pendevig* on all Dyved ’. In the RB version the term is *penhaf arglwyd*, ‘ chief lord ’ and in *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, Cadivor is described as *tywysawc Dyvet*, ‘ prince of Dyved ’. In the *Law-book of Blegywryd* (p. 129), we read *hyt pan gyfunhont y pende[v]ic ae wlat*, ‘ till the *pendevig* and his country agree ’. I owe these references to Prof. Thomas Jones.

the name of Rhiannon's husband from *Pendaran* Dyved to Pwyll *Pendevic* Dyved, necessitating the explanation that the Head of Dyved was henceforth called the Head of Annwvn, because tradition outside the Mabinogion was too strong to allow Pwyll's title to be changed.

VI

SUMMARY

It is extremely difficult, and perhaps impossible, to determine the comparative chronology of the changes which took place during the evolution of the two stories which we know as *Pwyll* and *Manawydan*. I venture, however, to suggest that we have sufficient data on which to base a general scheme of the various stages in their growth and to assign to those stages a logical order of development *within the totality*. These last three words imply some reservations, namely that a legend or motive of comparatively recent origin may have been introduced *before* another legend or motive of much greater antiquity. Further, a tale in a corrupt and much contaminated state may form a subsidiary part of another tale which in general shows a pristine purity. If we keep these two qualifications in mind and remember also that the Mabinogion as well as the whole "matter of Britain" are a compromise between a traditional canon and artistic innovation, made at a time when the idea of a historical conscience was unborn among popular writers, we may be able to deduce from the clues in the material the successive stages in its evolution, as follows :

STAGE I :

- (a) The Myth of the Great Queen Rigantona whose cult was associated with that of Epona the Horse-Goddess. She was portrayed sometimes in the form of a horse, sometimes surrounded by foals, and at other times with the trappings of a horse, such as a horse-collar. In less barbaric portrayals, she was represented as a woman riding a walking or trotting horse. Her consort was the Great King, Tigernonos.
- (b) The Myth of the Great Mother, Matrona, whose son Maponos was stolen from her by the King

of the Other-world. While Maponos was in the Other-world, a great darkness and desolation fell upon the land, and his mother wandered over the earth seeking him. When she found him, light and life were restored to the world.

It is probable that statuary and altars depicting incidents in these two myths were extant in Dyfed up to comparatively recent times.

STAGE II :

The legends of Rigantona and Matrona were fused together in the early stages, so that in Wales Rhiannon and Modron had, at least in one respect, an identical history. It thus came about that Rhiannon's son, like Mabon, was snatched away into the Other-world and a great desolation fell upon the land until he was rescued by Rhiannon's consort, Teyrnnon. The rescue by Teyrnnon has been preserved in *Pwyll II*. (See the last paragraph on page iii.)

STAGE III :

Rhiannon retains her association with horses and asses. It is probable that her offspring had been represented as a foal, or that the foal associated with her in statuary was understood to be her son. This foal is lost, and rescued by Teyrnnon. At the same time, in the Modron form of the legend, the son was a human child.

STAGE IV :

- (a) Contamination by an early form of the *Demon's Revenge* theme in which the Demon puts the foal in Rhiannon's bed instead of the child, Gweir. Teyrnnon the father watches by the bed and restores the child.
- (b) Parallel to this was the Modron-Mabon legend which still persisted independently. The son Gweir is restored by his father in an early version on which *Manawydan* is based.

STAGE V :

Contamination of (a) by a *Demon Hand* (DH) legend which had already been itself contaminated by the *Faithful Dog* (FD) story.

STAGE VI :

- (a) The whole of the above is cast into the framework of the *Calumniated Wife*. Rhiannon is unjustly accused of giving birth to a foal, the punishment is having to act as a mare.
- (b) The Modron-Mabon type is still independent, but is now contaminated by a legend of Caswallon, the evil wizard who causes the desolation.

STAGE VII :

The story of Rhiannon as the *Calumniated Wife* is contaminated by another form of the *Calumniated Wife* in which the queen is accused of killing her child, but the punishment of having to act as a mare remains unchanged.

STAGE VIII :

- (a) The whole legend of Rhiannon and her son is given a local habitation in Dyved, and enters into the traditional history of Pryderi, the Hero of Dyved, whose father was Pendaran Dyved.
- (b) The Mabon-Modron type, not yet localised in Dyved, adopts Rhiannon's son Gweir as the lost child. To this stage belongs the *Mabinogi of Mynweir a Mynord*.

STAGE IX :

- (a) To the legend of Pryderi thus far developed is attached a tale of Irish Dyved which described the begetting of the Hero on Rhiannon, Queen of Dyved, by Pwyll Pen Annwvn in the form of her husband, Pendaran Dyved.

- (b) Manawydan who in the original Irish story was the Other-world father who had carried away his own son ousts Caswallon as the evil Wizard.

STAGE X :

- (a) Pwyll Pendevig Dyved ousts Pendaran Dyved as Rhiannon's husband.
- (b) Manawydan being named in some traditions as the father of Gweir-Pryderi now becomes the Deliverer, and his place as the Evil Magician is taken by Llwyd vab Cilcoed.

STAGE XI :

The Modron-Gweir story under the influence of the Pryderi legend became the story of Rhiannon and Pryderi.

STAGE XII :

The Adventures of Pryderi, Rhiannon, and Manawydan are cast into the framework of the Eustace legend. Manawydan thus becomes the *exemplum* of the suffering gentleman who refuses to retaliate on his enemies.

After this there were probably many minor stages in which the contradictions and incoherences which had resulted from the mixed development sketched above were ironed out, new incidents being added to explain away the contradictions.

It should be noted that the correspondence between the two versions of the loss of the son in *Pwyll* and *Manawydan* is much closer than it appears at first sight. Just as Manawydan rescues his wife as well as his own son so Teyrnon not only rescues his son, Gwri, but also delivers Rhiannon from her penance.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AT. *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* by Roger Sherman Loomis. New York, 1949.
- B. *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, Univ. of Wales Press, 1923—.
- BBC. *The Black Book of Carmarthen*, reproduced . . . by J. Gwenogvryn Evans. Pwllheli, 1908.
- BG. *British Goblins, etc.*, by Wirt Sikes. London, 1880.
- BT. *The Text of the Book of Taliesin*, reproduced . . . by J. Gwenogvryn Evans. Llanbedrog, 1910.
- C. *T Cymmrodor*, Hon. Soc. of Cymmrodorion, London.
- CF. *Celtic Folklore* . . . by John Rhys. Oxford, 1901.
- CH. . . . *Celtic Heathendom*, by John Rhys. The Hibbert Lectures, 1886 (3rd Edition, London, 1898).
- DRE. *Hasting's Dictionary of Religion and Ethics*.
- ET. *Elucidarium and other tracts* . . . from Llyvyr Agkyr Llandewivrevri. ed. J. Morris Jones and John Rhys. Oxford, 1894.
- FAB. *The Four Ancient Books of Wales* by W. F. Skene. Edinburgh, 1868.
- GRB. *Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth* . . . by Acton Griscom. London, 1929.
- LBS. *The Lives of the British Saints* . . . by S. Baring-Gould and John Fisher. London, 1908.
- LL. *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâu*. J. G. Evans and J. Rhys. Oxford, 1893.
- MM. *Math vab Mathonwy* an inquiry into the . . . Fourth Branch of the Mabinogion, by W. J. Gruffydd. Univ. of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1928.
- NLWJ. *The National Library of Wales Journal*, Aberystwyth.
- OCR. *Old Celtic Romances* translated . . . by P. W. Joyce. Dublin, 1920.
- OW. Old Welsh.
- PKM. *Pedeir Kainc y Mabinogi* gan Ifor Williams. Caerdydd, 1930.
- PMLA. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*.
- RB. *The text of the Mabinogion* . . . from the Red Book of Hergest. J. Rhys and J. G. Evans. Oxford, 1887.
- RC. *Revue Celtique*. Paris, 1870—.
- THSC. *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*. London, 1892—.
- TWH. *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* . . . by the late J. F. Campbell. Paisley, 1890.
- WB. *The White Book Mabinogion* . . . edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans. Pwllheli, 1907.
- ZCP. *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* . . . Halle, 1897—.

INDEX

1. General.

Pryderi is not included in the index ; this name occurs on almost every page.

- Aarne-Thompson, 62.
 Achilles, 6.
Acta Sanctorum, 73*n*.
Aeneid, 2
Aided, 11.
 Aidán, 24, 25.
 Anglesey, 7.
 Annwvn, 13, 15, 20, 28, 29.
Anoethu, 97.
 Anwyl, Sir Edward, 67, 76*n*.
 Apocryphal Gospels, 103.
 Apollo, 73, 92.
 Apostles' Creed, 103.
 Arawn, 20, 22, 35, 37, 39, 87.
 Arberth, 8, 18, 18*n*, 23.
 Ardudwy, 7.
Areithiau, 3.
 Arianrhod, 4, 85.
 Arthur, 91, 97.
Arthur et Gorlagon, 58*n*.
 Arthurian Cycle, 5, 6, 9, 18, 45.
 Attis, 101.
 Axona, 98.
 'Badger in the Bag,' 49, 54, 71.
 Baetán, 26.
 Bards, 4.
 Becker, J., 104.
 Beheading Test, 38.
Beirdd, 5.
Bel Inconnu, 93.
 Beuno, 105.
 Black Hag, 26-8.
 Blodeuwedd, 7.
Bown of Hampton, 4.
Braint, 17, 19.
 Brân, 8, 9, 61.
 Branch (*Cainc*), 9, 10*n*.
 Brandiganz, 92.
 Branwen, Crime and Punishment of, 61, 63.
Branwen, Mabinogi of, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 62, 91, 104.
Bricriu's Feast, 38.
Broch yng Nghod, *see* 'Badger in the Bag.'
Buchedd Beuno, 98.
 Bwya, 41, 41*n*.
 Caer Dathal, 15.
 Caernarvon, 7, 8.
 Caer Siddi, 91.
 Caillech Dub, *see* Black Hag.
 Caint, 74.
Calumniated Wife, 58, 60, 110.
 Carchar Gweir, 94.
 Carchar Mabon, 94.
 Casnar Wledig, 79.
 Caswallon, 74-6, 83-5, 88, 110, 111.
 Cauldron of Resurrection, 11, 97*n*.
 Celtic Folk-tales, 3.
 Chansons de Geste, 4.
 Chastity, 44.
 Chaucer, 58, 58*n*.
 Chrétien de Troyes, 2, 5, 9, 18, 73.
 Christian influence, 27.
 Cilcoed, 89.
 Cigva, 14, 77-8, 79.
 Clerical Errors, 81-2.
 Cloak of Enchantment, 75, 88.
 Clynnóg, 105.
Compert, 9, 11.
Compert Mongáin, 24, 26, 28, 30-2.
 Conception of Arthur, 44.
 Conception Story, 11.
 Constance, 58.
 Contamination in story, 44, 87.
 Cook, A. B., 101.
 Copyist's errors, 16, 81-2.
 Coroniaid, 21*n*.
 Cowell, Prof. E. B., 97.
 Crete, 104.
 Crime and Punishment, 63.
Kulhwch ac Olwen, 3, 41, 71, 91.
 Cybele, 100-1.
Cyvarwydd, 2, 3.
Cyvarwyddyd, 3, 4, 5, 6.
Cywyddau, 4.
 Dafydd ap Gwilym, 54.
 Darmerth, 52-3.
 Davies, Dr. John, 54.
 Deae Matres, 104.
 Demeter, 53, 100, 101.
 Demon Claw, 56, 58-9, 66, 110.
 Demon's Revenge, 109.
 Descent to Hell, 103.

- Die Gute Frau*, 74.
 Disguised Beggar Theme, 50-2.
 Doublet Stories, 75.
 Druidism, 85.
 Dublin, 8.
 Duel at the Ford, 38-9.
 Dyved, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 40.

 Earl, 22, 45.
 Earl Yniwl, 45.
 Ederu vab Nudd, 94.
 Evnysien, 62.
 Eglwys Lwyd, 89.
 Eidoel vab Aer, 97.
El Cavallero Cifar, 73.
 Enchantment on Dyved, 72.
 Epona, 67, 98, 103.
Erec, 92-4.
Ermic Dinbych 16-9.
Eustace Legend, 72-3, 75, 77, 89, 111.
 Evrain, 92.
Exempla, 78.
 Eywein, 93.

 Fairy bread, 72n.
 formula, 72.
 folklore, 67.
 hunt, 28.
 mound, 50.
 Faithful Dog, 59, 110.
 Fiachna, 24-9, 33, 36.
 Folk memory, 86.
 Folk tales, 6.
Foult Fitzwarren, 4.
 France, Anatole, 71.
 Frazer, Sir James, 100.
 French romance, 9.

 Galatia, 103.
 Gaulish soldiers, 104.
Geis, 28.
 Geoffrey of Monmouth, 5, 75-6, 84.
 Geraint, 94.
Geraint ac Enid, 45.
 Gerould, Prof. G. H., 73n.
Gesta Regum (Brut), 5.
 Giant's Daughter, 39.
 Gloyw Wallt Lydan, 79.
 Glosses, 3.
 Gloucester, 97n.
 Goewin, 4.
Golden Bough, 100.
 Golden slippers, 85.
Gormes, 21n, 75, 88.

Gorsedd, 50.
 Grail cycle, 78.
 Great Mother, 98-100.
 Great Queen, 13, 95, 100.
 Greid vab Eri, 92.
 Guest, Lady Charlotte, 1, 5.
Guillaume d' Engleterre, 73.
Guy of Warwick, 4.
 Gwawl vab Clud, 12, 48-9, 51-2, 89.
 Gweir, 13, 18, 91, 95, 100.
Gweir ('hay'), 97.
 Gwenhwyvar, 50.
 Gwern, 63.
 Gwgon Gwron, 98, 99.
 Gwri Wallt Eurin, 13, 20, 34, 56, 91.
 Paternity of, 99.
 Gwrvan Wallt Avwyn, 95.
 Gwron, 100.
 Gwydion, 5, 7, 15, 85.
 Gwyn vab Nudd, 80.
 Gwynedd, 5, 7, 8, 9.
 Gwyn Gloyw, 79.
 Gwyn Gohoyw, 79.

 Hades, 52, 102.
 Hadrian's Wall, 104.
 Hagiology, 99.
 Harlech, 8, 9.
 Havgan, 22, 35, 37, 38, 39.
 Hedge of Mist, 93.
 Hereford, 74.
 Herodotus, 43.
 Heveydd Hen, 48.
 Homer, 2, 51.
 Horse, 50, 56.
 Horse goddess, 105.
 Hounds of Annwvn, 42.
Hud ar Ddyved, 72.
 Hunter of Annwvn, 42n.
 Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd, 16.

 Ider fiz Nuz, 94.
 Introductory formula, 23.
 Iolo Morganwg, 35.
 Irayn, 94.
 Ireland, 8, 10, 28.
 Irish 8, 9.
 Folk tales, 2-3, 10.
 in Dyved, 40.
 Iseult, 50.
 Ishtar, 102.
 Island of the Giants, 8.

 Jones, Prof. Thomas, 107n.
 Jones, Rev. John (Tegid), 1n.

- Kent, 74.
 Kittredge, Prof, G. L., 58, 58*n*.

 Lacuna in text, 69.
 Laconia, 103.
 Lady from Fairyland, 66.
 of the Lake, 49.
Lame Ant, 71.
 Land of Promise, 27.
Le Beaus Desconnus, 94.
Le Braz, Anatole, 71.
Le Jongleur de Notre Dame, 71.
 Lewis Môn, 4.
 Liath mac Celtchair, 76*n*., 89.
 Links in story, 88.
Lives of the Saints, 2, 60.
 Llangatog, 50.
 Llantarnam, 56*n*.
 Lleu Llawgyffes, 4, 5, 8, 85.
 Lleu Saga, 9.
 Lloyd, Sir John E., 18.
 Lludd, 84, 92.
Lludd a Llevellys, 21*n*.
 Llwyd vab Cilcoed, 14, 76*n*., 89, 111.
 Llyn y Van Vach, 49.
 Llŷr, 83, 84.
 Lochlann, 26, 28.
 Loisy, Alfred, 1.
 Loomis, Prof, Roger S., 9, 33*n*.,
 46*n*., 87*n*., 92*n*.
 Lugoves, 85.

 Mabon, 91, 94, 95, 98, 100.
 Mabanagrain, 92, 94.
 Mabuz, 94.
Macbeth, 3.
 Madrun, 98, 99.
 Magic and Enchantment, 15.
 Magicians, 76.
 Magna Mater, 100.
 Magnus, Sir Philip, 54.
Mamau, 104.
 Man tried by Fate, 74.
 Manannán mac Lir, 25, 27-9, 33, 36.
 Manawyd, 86.
Manawydan, Mabinogi, 3, 14, 23-4,
 68, 71, 82.
 Manawydan, 11, 68*ff*., 82, 86.
 character of, 80.
Man of Law's Tale, 58.
 Manuscripts, 6.
 Maponos, 99, 100.
 Marne, 98.
Math vab Mathonwy, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11,
 14, 15, 57, 62.
 Matrona, 99, 100.

 Matter of Britain, 2, 6.
 Matthew Paris, 74*n*.
 May Eve, 56.
 Maximilian, The Emperor, 54.
 Meleageant, 50.
 Milwas, 50.
 Merioneth, 7.
 Merlin, 94.
 Methodist Revival, 106.
 Mexico, 54.
 Meyer, Prof. Kuno, 81*n*.
 Mice in the Corn, 71.
 Modron, 95, 98, 100.
 Mongán, 25, 27, 29, 33, 87.
 Moninnán, son of Ler, 25.
 Monstrous Birth, 60.
 Morris-Jones, Sir John, 81*n*.
 Morddwyd Tyllion, 62.
 Mother wrongly accused, 58.
 Mydron, 96.
 Mynord, 90, 96.
 Mynweir, 90.
Mynweir a Mynord, 68, 71, 88, 90, 91,
 95, 110.
 Myth of Epona, 108.
 Great Queen, 108.
 Matrona, 108.
 Rhannon, 13, 55.

 Name, Omission of, 37.
 Name and Character, Correspondence
 of, 101.
 Narberth, *see* Arberth.
 Nausicaa, 6.
Nod Beuno, 105.
 Nodens, 84.
 Nuadh, 84.
 Nudd, 84.
 Nutt, David, 44.

 Odysseus, 6, 51.
Odyssey, 2, 6, 51.
 Oldest Animals, 97.
 Onomastic stories, 8.
 Oriental stories, 72.
 Other-world, *see* Annwvn.
 Other-world being, 38, 39.
 feast, 45.
 scenery, 32.

 Oxford, 72.

 Pair Dadeni, 11, 14.
Paradise Lost, 2.
 Paris, Gaston, 38, 92.
 Paternity, 29.

- Partholon, 77.
Pedhir Cainc y Mabinogi, 1.
 Pembrokeshire, 7.
 Pen Annwvn, 22, 40.
 Penance of Branwen, 61-3.
 of Rhiannon, 49.
Penceirddiaid, 5.
 Pendaran Dyved, 18, 19, 20, 24, 57,
 65-6, 106.
 Pendevig Dyved, 33, 34, 40, 107,
 107n.
 Peniarth MS.6., 1.
Peredur, 23.
 Persephone, 53, 101.
 Pessinus, 103.
 Philipot, E., 93, 94.
 Phygalia, 103.
 Pluto, 101.
 Pompeii, 104.
Pope Gregory Legend, 73.
Preiddeu Annwvn, 33.
 Price, Rev. Thomas (Carnhuanawc),
 1n.
 Privilege of Tenby, 17.
 Protestant Reformation, 106.
Pryderi dir, 6.
 Pwyll, 11, 37.
Pwyll i and ii, 23-4.
Pwyll i, 29, 32, 33.
Pwyll, ii, 11.
 Pwyll and Rhiannon, 47.
 name of, 33.
 Pen Annwvn, 33.
 titles of, 32, 33.

 Raid on Annwvn, 91.
 Rathmore, 24.
 Regina Sancta, 103.
Return of Odysseus, 51.
 Rhiannon, 100, 103ff.
 Birds of, 9, 104.
 as Calumniated Wife, 65.
 Crime of, 58.
 and Modron, 96.
 Myth of, 65, 74.
 Penance of, 20, 57-8.
 Rhŷs, Sir John, 49n., 64, 76n., 80n.,
 81n., 100.
 Rigantona, 98, 100.
 Roman Soldiers, 105.
 "Runs," 3.

 Saga of Lleu Llaw Gyffes, 15.
 of Pryderi, 12-15.
 St. Eustathius (Eustace), 73.
 Schlauch, Margaret, 58n.
 Scotland, 3, 24.
 Shoemakers, 85.
 Sikes, Wirt, 50.
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, 38.
Sir Ysumbras, 73, 77.
 Sirona, 98.
 Southern dialects, 7.
Spoils of Annwvn, 14, 33n.

 Taurobolium, 105.
 Tenby, 16-8.
 Test for a fairy child, 61.
 Teyrnnon, 18, 19, 20, 34, 40, 99, 100.
 Teyrnnon-Rhiannon myth, 41.
 Theospita, 73.
 Three Gold Cordwainers, 84-85.
 Thurneysen, Prof., 23n.
 Tigernonos, 100.
 Trajan, 73.
 Trawsfynydd, 98.
 Triads, 5, 35, 83, 84, 91.
 Tudur Aled, 4, 5.

 Ulster, 26.
Urddawl Ben, 10.

 Vironos, 100.
Voyage of Bran, 24, 44.

 Waste Land, 14, 72, 76, 77, 102.
 Wedding feast, 52.
 Welsh and Irish names, 80-1.
 White Book MS., 1.
 Williams, Prof. David, 18.
 Williams, Sir Ifor, 1, 6, 16, 64, 81n.,
 83.
 Woodhouse, Prof. W. J., 51n.

Ymyrryd, 5.
 Ynyr Gwent, 98.
Ystên Sioned, 35.
 Ywain, 93.

2. *Words.*

Baile Atha Cliath, 8.
 Brangien, 82.
 Bwya, 41, 41*n*.

Cichmann, 77.
 Ciochba, 77.
 carreg, 8.
 clwydau, 8.
 Cnychwr mab Nes, 81.
 Corroi mab Doyry, 81.
 Cubert mab Daere, 81.
 Cúroí, 81.
 cyffes, 82*n*.
 cymes, 82*n*.

Danu, 81.
 Diarwya, 41*n*.
 Dôn, 81.
 Donwy, 81.

ebol, 104.
 ech, 104.
 epos, 104.
 equus, 104.

Fercos m. Poch, 81.
 Fergus mac Roich, 81.

Glini, 97.
 gorsedd, 47.
 gorvod, 75.
 Gwron, 98.

hardd, 8.

Llantarnam, 56.
 Llantorvaen, 56*n*.
 llech, 8.
 lleddv, 82, 84.
 Lleu, 81, 82.
 Lleu Llaw Gyffes, 82*n*.
 Lochlann, 26*n*.
 Llychlyn, 26*n*.

Llyn y Morynion, 8.
 Llwyd vab Cilcoed, 87.
 Lotor a Ffotor, 96*n*.
 Lugh, 81.
 Lugovibus, 81*n*.
 Lugus, 81.

Mabon, 98.
 Madrun, 98.
 Manand, 81.
 Manannán, 80.
 Manawydan, 80, 81.
 Maponos, 98.
 Marne, 98.
 Matrōna, 98.
 Mātrona, 98.
 Modron, 98.
 Mynwar, 97.

Nant Teyrnnon, 56*n*.
 ordd, 97.

Past tense in -s, 7.
 peddyd, 7.
 pendevis, 107*n*.
 plant, 64, 64*n*.

Rhiannon, 98.
 rhiain, 98.
 Rhyd y Peddestri, 7, 8.
 Rigantona, 98.

Sach a Salach, 96, 96*n*.
 Se ac Asse, 96, 96*n*.
 Sovir ac Ovir, 96.

Teyrnnon, 56, 98.
 Twryv Vliant, 56*n*.

Vironos, 99.

Ynywl, 46*n*.
 y vot, 64, 64*n*.

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